Department of Fatwa

The Ministry of Endowments & Islamic Affairs

A Beneficial Summary of Rulings for New Muslim

Translated by
Shaikh Mohammed Daniel

Proofread by
Fernando Rodriguez

Islamic Research Team
Department of Fatwa
State of Kuwait

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& Islamic Affairs

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بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent the Most Merciful

A Message from the Management

All praise be to Allah, The Lord of all Worlds who has sent down the Wise Book and we bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone free from all partners who stated in the Noble Quran:

﴿أَفَمَن شَرَحَ ٱللَّهُ صَدۡرَهُۥ لِلۡإِسۡلَٰمِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٖ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦۚ فَوَيۡلٞ لِّلۡقَٰسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مِّن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ فِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٍ ٢٢﴾

"Is he whose breast Allah has opened to Islam, so that he is in light from his Lord (as he who is non-Muslim)? So, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against remembrance of Allah! They are in plain error!" [39:22]

And may salutations and peace be upon the Truthful Guide who stated:

"I have been sent with a forgiving Islamic monotheism."[(1)]

This implies that the religion of Islam is established on the Oneness of Allah, mercy and ease. As the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Islam wipes out that which is before it."[(2)]

This means that all sins before Islam are wiped out and forgiven.

And as to what follows:

It brings great pleasure to the Department of Fatwa in the State of Kuwait to congratulate those that have joined the radiant gardens of Islam that without a doubt will have a wonderful effect on their selves by improving their understanding and removing the many contradictions of creed from their minds as well as providing them with genuine relief in their lives. Despite the fact that this relief does not mean they will not face any challenges or problems in their life as Allah tests his slaves by refining them as the Almighty has said:

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

﴿ أَحَسِبَ ٱلنَّاسُ أَن يُتۡرَكُوٓاْ أَن يَقُولُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا وَهُمۡ لَا يُفۡتَنُونَ ٢ وَلَقَدۡ فَتَنَّا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡۖ فَلَيَعۡلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُواْ وَلَيَعۡلَمَنَّ ٱلۡكَٰذِبِينَ ٣ ﴾

"Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: 'We believe' and will not be tested. And we indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars, (although Allah knows all that before putting them to test). " [29:2-3]

However, we are completely certain that you have made the right decision and are the real winner, if Allah so wills.

It is for this reason that we present to you as a gift this book entitled "A Beneficial Summary of Rulings for New Muslims" and hope from Allah the Exalted that it will help light your path to the Everlasting Garden of the Hereafter. You will find it to be a comprehensive book that contains many rulings that a Muslim cannot afford to be ignorant of in order to practice their religion correctly.

We ask Allah the Exalted to accept this work from us.

Manager of the Department of Fatwa

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent the Most Merciful

Prologue

All praise be to Allah, The Lord of all Worlds and we bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, free from all partners and Protector of the Pious. We bear witness that Mohammed is His slave and messenger; may salutations and peace be upon him and his family and companions.

And as to what follows:

Indeed the blessings of Allah upon his creation are many and great; they cannot be counted or calculated as Allah has said:

﴿ وَإِن تَعُدُّواْ نِعۡمَةَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحۡصُوهَآۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٨ ﴾

"And if You would count the graces of Allah, never could You be Able to count them. Truly! Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [16:18]

The most important and greatest of all the blessings of Allah, is for one to be guided upon the Straight Path, the path of truth which He has commanded all his slaves to follow in His obedience, as Allah has said:

﴿ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ أَكۡمَلۡتُ لَكُمۡ دِينَكُمۡ وَأَتۡمَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ نِعۡمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمَ دِينٗا ﴾

"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." [5:3]

Indeed, it is the greatest of blessings and gifts that Allah has bestowed on His slaves as only through it can one achieve happiness and respite in this world and an immense success in the Hereafter, as Allah has said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَانَتۡ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلۡفِرۡدَوۡسِ نُزُلًا ١٠٧ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبۡغُونَ عَنۡهَا حِوَلٗا ١٠٨ ﴾

"Verily! those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, shall have the Gardens of Al-Firdaus (the Paradise) for their entertainment. Wherein they shall dwell (forever). no desire will they have to be removed there from. " [18:107-108]

Islam is the religion of Allah and there is no other path to truth except through it. It is the religion of natural disposition on which Allah has created all humankind upon. It is the religion of all prophets and apostles, founded upon the Oneness of Allah the Exalted; His sole worship and total submission and following of His sacred laws. Allah will not accept the actions of people in the Hereafter unless they are in accordance with these laws as he has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَمَن يَبۡتَغِ غَيۡرَ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمِ دِينٗا فَلَن يُقۡبَلَ مِنۡهُ وَهُوَ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٨٥ ﴾

"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and In the Hereafter He will be one of the losers." [3:85]

Islam is the only path for happiness and success in this world and the next.

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) was extremely active in inviting all of humankind to Islam, guiding them to the Oneness of the Lord of the Earth and Heavens. He never left any system or method in inviting and guiding them to Islam except that he would try his utmost to use it concerned all the while about the happiness and success of humankind until Allah the Exalted told him:

﴿ لَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٞ نَّفۡسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُواْ مُؤۡمِنِينَ ٣ ﴾

"It may be that you (O Mohammed) are going to kill yourself with grief, that they do not become believers." [26:3]

Meaning: It may be that you will kill yourself through the constant worry and concern that you have for humankind to believe and be guided.

In the same way, the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) was extremely active in ensuring that people were guided to Islam, he was extremely happy for those that embraced Islam as he was the most knowledgeable regarding the immense and supreme blessing of guidance and the happiness and success it entailed for those who were guided, as Allah the Exalted described him:

﴿ لَقَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُولٞ مِّنۡ أَنفُسِكُمۡ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيۡهِ مَا عَنِتُّمۡ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيۡكُم
بِٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ رَءُوفٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٢٨ ﴾

"Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger (Mohammed) from amongst yourselves it grieves Him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He (Mohammed) is anxious over you (to be rightly guided, to repent to Allah, and beg Him to pardon and forgive your sins, In order that you may enter Paradise and be saved from the punishment of the Hell-fire), for the believers (He is) full of pity, kind, and merciful." [9:128]

As you dear new Muslim, have been blessed by Allah with the immense blessing of guidance, you are in great need of learning the rulings and principles of your religion. You must learn the correct creed; correct performance of obligatory actions; the foundation of dealings with those around you, especially those who are still non-Muslims. It is for this reason, that in this book we have compiled for you the most important rulings that you must be aware of and have entitled it:

(A Beneficial Summary of Rulings for New Muslim)

We hope for the sake of Allah the Exalted that we have been successful in the choice of topics and our explanation of them.

At this juncture, we would also like to mention that the religion of Islam is a divine methodology free from all incorrections and imperfections. As for humans, we all strive in our pursuit of knowledge and understanding, there are those of us who are correct, and those who are incorrect and we will remain in this state until the Last Day. This work is our effort, therefore whatever it contains of goodness and truth is from Allah the Exalted; whatever it contains of badness and error is from the Satan and us, and Allah and His Apostle are free from such.

The Methodology used in compiling this book

This book has been written using the following method:

1) We have made every effort to use simple words and modern standard language so that new Muslims will find it easy to understand and implement.
2) We have focused on only the most important creedal aspects and rulings that every new Muslim must be aware of. In the same way, we have only covered the obligatory acts of worship that cannot be left unpracticed.
3) We have depended on the majority of scholarly opinion in the 'Schools of Thought' when discussing general issues of jurisprudence, as well as the positions reached by the Fatwa Committee at the Kuwait Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs. We have supported these by verses of the Holy Quran and authentic prophetic narrations, without going into too much detail in order to keep things short and simple for new Muslims.

4) The book has been divided into four chapters: The first chapter gives a comprehensive description of Islam. The second chapter covers the most important matters related to belief and creed. The third chapter covers the most important rulings in relation to jurisprudence and obligatory acts of worship that a new Muslim must know. The fourth chapter covers the rulings in relation to societal and financial relations for a new Muslim.

Finally, we would like to end by petitioning Allah the Exalted to accept this effort from us as a good deed that has been done seeking His pleasure only. We ask Allah to bless and make it beneficial for all; He alone is The Guarantor and to Him alone do we submit and depend on. May Allah grant salutations and peace upon our Master Mohammed and upon his family and companions.

Islamic Research Team

Department of Fatwa

State of Kuwait

Advice to a New Muslim

All praise be to Allah, The Lord of all Worlds and may salutations and peace be upon the noblest of the Prophets and the Messengers our Master Mohammed and upon his family and companions.

Congratulations on your Islam

First, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you on your wonderful choice of Islam as your religion and I ask Allah to give you steadfastness on the truth, elevate your status, increase your faith, and strengthen your conviction.

Dear truthful Muslim,

Allah your Lord has sealed all previous divine laws with those of Islam and has sealed the coming of prophets with the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and called humankind to accept these two things. Those that accepted the call of Allah have become true believers, they are required to fulfill all religious obligations for which they are entitled to all rights afforded to Muslims.

Be joyful and pleased and thank Allah the Exalted as He has chosen you to be a servant of His amongst many who have been misguided. Your response to the call of Allah the Exalted and His Messenger is the sole guarantor for a good life as He said in the Holy Quran:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱسۡتَجِيبُواْ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمۡ لِمَا يُحۡيِيكُمۡ ﴾

"O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life." [8:25]

And He also said:

﴿ مَنۡ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوۡ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤۡمِنٞ فَلَنُحۡيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةٗ طَيِّبَةٗ ﴾

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life." [16:97]

Glad tidings to you and do not despair by what you see in regards to the condition of the Muslims as you have caught on to the mount of those who are making their way to Allah the Exalted and you have become one of them. Do you not know that this religion has spread throughout the four corners of the world and there is no city worldwide except that there are Muslims who worship Allah alone?

This religion has astonished thousands of educated and uneducated people alike who every year come into the fold of Islam convinced by its dominance over all other religions.

Don't look back, that which has passed in your life has passed and Islam has guaranteed for you a new life free from impurities and sins as if you have been born in to this world again. You are now unsoiled and pure as our Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said to one of his companions who wanted to enter Islam, but was afraid for the sins he had committed:

"Do you not know that Islam wipes out the actions that came before it?"[1]

There is no religion that exists that is similar to the religion of Islam -which you have decided to enter- for your Lord is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy, your Prophet is a 'Mercy to the Worlds' and the divine laws were revealed through mercy and kindness. In Islam there are no extreme hardships or impossible regulations, but all commands have come in harmony with your natural disposition and take into consideration your normal and urgent situations.

Be convinced that you will not find an Islamic rule that contradicts your natural disposition or contravenes your life from all angles; rather you will find that Islamic laws have combined between the complete obedience of Allah the Exalted and your need to have a gracious, sophisticated and pure life.

Read in the Book of your Lord –the Quran- and peruse in it and you will find what you had lost, for indeed it is a complete book that covers all spheres of your life including Tauheed (The Oneness of Allah), worship, anecdotes, history, morals and knowledge through which you will know your Lord as He wants you to know Him with His perfect attributes, His glorified description and His excellent, wise and fair injunctions.

Whatever your education and irrespective of your background, the Book of Allah, will amaze you by its style and words as it has come directly from Allah the Exalted. From Him it has come, to Him it will return, and no falsehood can be found within it. In fact, there is not a single book in existence that challenges its readers to find a single, even minute mistake or contradiction as Allah the Exalted had challenged the people of eloquence and rhetoric (The tribe of Quraish)[2]

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا۟ فِيهِ ٱخْتِلَـٰفًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾ ﴾

Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah , they would have found within it much contradiction. [4:82]

(1) Transmitted by Sahih Muslim.
(2) The most noble Arab tribe at the time of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him).

Reason, think, perceive, contemplate, traverse through the world and increase yourself in knowledge and understanding are the things that are wanted of you by your Lord in Islam as we find in the Quran in numerous places:

﴿لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

"Perhaps they will give thought."[59:21]

﴿أَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُونَ﴾

"Then will you not reason?" [2:44]

﴿أَفَلَمۡ يَسِيرُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَيَنظُرُواْ﴾

"So have they not traveled through the earth and observed…?" [12:109)

For everything in existence guides you to Allah and He has given you these senses then sought from you to use them to come to know and believe in Him.

Moreover, with this, our religion is one of acknowledgement and submission and it is Islam that you have chosen to follow to the end of your days until you meet your Lord. Those things that your intellect and the combined intellect of humankind are unable to comprehend should be entrusted to Allah the Exalted. You should have full faith in Him and completely submit to him in order to be a true believer.

Your Prophet is Mohammed (peace be upon him). You should read his biography and get to know him and you will read about the greatest human being that has ever been known. Allah the Exalted did not create anyone better than him nor did he create anyone similar to him in his sublime character. As Allah raised the ranks of all Prophets over the rest of creation, he too raised the rank of Mohammed (peace be upon him) over all the worlds.

Are you not aware that all the sublime characteristics are combined in his person?

He was the kindest of people to live with and possessed the softest of hearts. He was the most easygoing person in his dealings, always smiling and never frowning at his companions. None had ever witnessed any evil from him, neither in Islam nor before the advent of it. He was the best of people in speech and he stated:

"The Muslim is the one whom other Muslims are safe from his tongue and hand."(1)

He was persecuted in the way of Allah, but was patient and was put through many ordeals in relation to his companions and family, but he bore them and forgave all. He was hurt by those who were closest to him, who expelled him from his home and the most beloved and sacred of cities and all for the sake of Allah the Exalted. However, he was the most truthful of people in delivering the message of his Lord and the most forgiving of them.

He was the best of people towards his people and the most ascetic in what the people possessed; yet the most generous in what he possessed. He never refused a soul and never said the word 'no' to anyone. He would always be good to the people and only seek his reward with Allah the Exalted.

He was the most courageous and outspoken of people when spreading the truth; never fearing for a moment. He would command his people to do good and forbid them from evil and was the first to fulfill these commands and was the best of role models for his companions.

No one ever saw him except that they would love him and any human who met him irrespective of their background and stature in society would become awestruck by him. He had the softest of hearts, the kindest of temperaments, and a strong stature. He was handsome and blessed with graciousness. Sympathetic and loving, a sincere friend, the best of people in how he dealt with his family, the best in keeping ties of kinship. He would not get angry except for the sake of Allah and he never took revenge or made enemies with anyone for himself or through his own desire.

Know dear friend, that which you have believed in is great, and the Prophet whom you have got to know is colossal and you will accompany the most virtuous in the Hereafter.

Your faith in Prophet Mohammed is not correct if you reject Prophet Jesus (peace be upon them both) for you are required to believe in all of them and not to differentiate between them, however it was from the limitless wisdom of Allah that he decided to conclude all messages with the message of Islam. Whoever believes in the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) must believe in the complete message that he brought.

On the authority of Ubadah ibn Samit (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

"Whosoever testifies that None has the right to be worshipped but Allah Alone who has no partners, and that Mohammed is His slave and apostle, and that Jesus is Allah's slave and apostle and His word which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit from Him, and that Paradise is true, and Hell is true, Allah will admit him into Paradise through any of its eight gates that he likes."(1)

If you contemplate the pillars of faith and Islam, you will see that they have combined between the actions of the heart and limbs. Faith addresses the heart with Tauheed and conviction; and the pillars of Islam address the body with subservience and subjugation each of them complements the other. Therefore based on your nearness to Allah and your knowledge of Him and His religion you will achieve the reality of faith and the soul of Islam.

Look at the divine laws and rulings of Islam and you will see that it contains both ritual worship and daily transactions. The ritual worship is how we deal with our Lord and our daily transactions are how we deal with His creation. Islam has not neglected any of these aspects at the cost of the other, rather as we are commanded to strive for excellence in our ritual worship we are also commanded to strive for excellence in the way we deal with people. Allah has said:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَـٰنًا﴾

And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. [17:23]

"Make things easy for people and do not make things difficult. Spread good news and bring them joy do not be harsh and turn them away."(2)

With these words our Prophet (peace be upon him) enjoined his companions to deal with people as our religion does not have any place for extremism or harshness. Seek closeness to Allah by performing voluntary actions when you have energy and a content heart and you will enjoy your worship and achieve your goals.

Ask Allah the Exalted to bless you with beneficial knowledge and virtuous deeds and sit in the gatherings of knowledge in your mosque and ask any questions that you have. Do not neglect yourself as questioning in Islam for those who want to practice and worship is obligatory as you find in the Quran that Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"So ask the people of the message if you do not know." [16:43]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Your dedication to learning Islam is your path to success and the main cause for your stability so if you want to increase yourself in the strength of your faith then be steadfast in your obedience to Allah as a person's faith increases and decreases. It increases with obedience and decreases with sin, so be steadfast as you have been commanded to be by Allah and be punctual in your prayers with your brothers at the mosque. Attend the religious celebrations and do not be lax in any of the pillars of Islam such as the five daily prayers, obligatory almsgiving, and Hajj as Allah has guaranteed that if you do this, your faith will become stronger, rather you will taste the sweetness of this faith.

The best friend that you have is the one that shows you goodness and helps you to remain upon it and who you can trust in your religious affairs. Find out where the Islamic presentation committees are and follow the way of the good people that work there and attend their educational gatherings and Islamic lectures as these contain many benefits.

Beware of feeling estranged on your path to Allah the Exalted. If Allah is with you does it harm you that no one else is with you? It is stated in the Quran:

﴿قَالَ أَصۡحَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا لَمُدۡرَكُونَ ٦١ قَالَ كَلَّآۖ إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهۡدِينِ ٦٢﴾

"And when the two companies saw one another, the companions of Moses said, "Indeed, we are to be overtaken!" [Moses] said, "No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me."[26:61-62]

You are always close to Allah wherever you may be; do not despair in the mercy of Allah even if you have shortcomings. Turn to him and ask him for forgiveness for your sins as Allah the Exalted loves those who seek repentance and the door to repentance is open and your Lord is Oft-forgiving.

Dearest friend in Islam,

I am unable to express to you the happiness that I feel for you, nor the delight that I have that you have been guided. Indeed today, you have become a friend and companion and it has become obligatory upon your brothers as your right upon them that they should look after you and take pleasure in your coming into Islam and aspire to befriend you.

My final request from you is that you carry this brilliant torch of Islam worldwide as from now on you have become a messenger of the messenger of Allah -Mohammed- (peace be upon him) to all of humankind. You are to call them to Allah the Exalted and to His religion through your words and actions as instructed by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when he said:

"Convey from me even if it be one verse."[1]

وصلَّى اللهُ على سيِّدِنا محمَّدٍ، وعلى آلِهِ، وصحبِهِ أجمعِينَ.

May the salutations of Allah be upon our Master Mohammed and upon his entire family and companions.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

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Islamic Research Team
Department of Fatwa
State of Kuwait

Chapter One

Verily, the Religion with Allah is Islam

Allah the Exalted sent his Messenger Mohammed (peace be upon him) with a religion to complete all religions and He made it a judge over them and a nullifier of their commandments. Allah has guaranteed that he would preserve this religion from all corruption and alteration and he described it as the 'Straight Path'. Whoever walks on it will be safeguarded in this world and the Hereafter and whoever turns away from it and walks on another path will be misguided and in ruin because opposing it means that a human being contradicts the natural disposition which Allah has created him upon.

Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

"So direct your face towards the religion, inclining to truth and turning away from all that is false, in accordance with the natural disposition which God has instilled into man. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most people do not know." [30:30]

Firstly: Islam is the Religion of Human Nature

Allah created the human self in a way that it is naturally inclined to everything that is good, practical and beneficial and to dislike everything that contains evil, corruption and harm. Therefore, you see humankind incline naturally to good food and drink which is tasty and wholesome and stay away from food that is filthy and harmful. In the same way, humans incline towards keeping the company of those who have high morals and upright character and keep away from those who are immoral and ill mannered. They love and respect those who have faultless qualities treating such people with decency and respect and at the same time, they do not treat those who have many faults with the same decency and respect.

This is the natural disposition that Allah has created in the human heart and self and He has made the heart capable of accepting the truth as he has created the eyes capable of seeing and the ears capable of hearing. As long as the heart remains capable of accepting truth it will perceive and be guided to it; but if the heart changes because of following whims and desires, then it becomes misguided and follows falsehood. As we find in the words of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) who said:

"Allah said:`I created my servants as monotheists, but the devils came to them and deviated them from their religion, prohibiting what I allowed and commanding them to ascribe partners to me for which I gave no authority."(1)

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has informed us that there is no human born into this world except that he is upon the nature that Allah has created him upon. Then external influences come along that affect and change this nature. As we find on the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him):

"No child is born except on Al-Fitrah (Islam) but his parents make him Jewish, Christian or Magian, as an animal delivers a perfect young animal: do you see any part of its body mutilated?"

Then Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) said:"Read if you will the following verse:

﴿فِطۡرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِي فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيۡهَاۚ لَا تَبۡدِيلَ لِخَلۡقِ ٱللَّهِۚ﴾

"Fitrah (i.e. Allah's Islamic monotheism), with which He has created mankind. No change let there be in Khalq-illâh (i.e. the Religion of Allah Islamic Monotheism)" [30:30](2)

Subsequently, the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) informed us that it is human nature to follow Islam and to not follow any other erroneous religion or misguided sect that was not revealed by Allah. Notice how, in the previous narration the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) did not say "or make them Muslim" as this shows that Islam is the religion of human nature and this is supported by another narration which clearly states this:

"There is no newborn baby, except that he is born on this religion until his tongue allows him to express himself otherwise."(3)

Those that get to know the teachings of Islam recognise clearly that it is the truth that must be followed because its teachings nurture the healthy nature of humankind and promote it, and they do not revolt against it as it is made up of the following:

1) It commands us to worship Allah alone ascribing no partners to Him; He is the Creator of the whole universe and for him alone is sovereignty and He alone has power over all things. The healthy human nature requires that he who is described with perfection deserves respect and esteem, so how about He whose perfection is absolute and has no end or limits?

(1) Transmitted by Sahih Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Sahih Muslim.

2) Islamic teachings have permitted all things of goodness and have forbidden all things that contain impurity because the healthy nature inclines towards all goodness and keeps away from impurity.

3) The teachings of Islam emphasise the adornment of oneself with good morals and an upright character and has forbidden obscenity and indecency because virtuous individuals prefer everything that is from goodness and reject everything that is indecent.

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Then I was brought two cups in one of them was milk and in the other one there was wine and it was said to me: Select any one you like. So I selected the cup containing milk and drank it. Then I was told: You have attained what is natural (i.e. Islam) had you selected the wine your nation would have gone astray."(1)

Second: What is Islam?

There is no religion on the face of the earth except that it traces its origin to a person or a nation. So we find that Jews trace themselves back to Judah, Christians back to Christ (peace be upon him), Buddhists back to Buddha, and similarly all other religions. However, Islam traces its origin back to a special quality that is synonymous with subservience, obedience and the implementation of all commandments that were set by Allah; Islam means the total submission to Him alone. Allah called his religion Islam because the Muslim is required to submit to the belief that Allah alone is worthy of worship and that His commandments and prohibitions must be upheld without the least bit of hesitation or resistance.

From this word "Islam" it becomes clear that this religion is not the product of any human being, nor is it specific to a particular nation, and its only goal is that all of humankind possesses this quality that is unique to Islam only.

Furthermore, the specific understanding of Islam as the religion brought to us through the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) does not depart from this characteristic which includes the term 'Islam'; for indeed his call was based on bringing humankind out from the worship of creation, whims, and desires to the worship and submission to Allah the Exalted, and to the compliance and obedience to everything He enjoined and avoidance of everything He forbade.

Therefore, we can summarise that Islam is complete submission to Allah the Exalted through Tawheed (Belief in the Oneness of Allah) and following Him through obedience until love for Him is firmly fixed in the heart of the Muslim;

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

and it is the purification and clearing of the heart of any form of ascribing partners to Him or disbelief in any of its forms until its impurities are completely removed from the heart of the Muslim; as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) guided us to when he said:

"And he should despise to return to disbelief as he would despise to be thrown in a fire."[(1)]

Third: Islam is the religion of all Prophets

Indeed every human on earth is obligated to be one who submits to Allah, is obedient to Him, following what He enjoined and avoiding what He forbade irrespective of differences in time or place, however when people changed their religion and began to follow their whims and desires they departed from the truth and began to follow falsehood. So Allah the Exalted sent Messengers to take people by the hand and direct them to the path of guidance and truth and to return them to belief in the Oneness of Allah and his worship, as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدُونِ ٢٥﴾

"And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me." [21:25]

So whoever responded to their call deserved to be called "Muslim" which Allah the Exalted called all of His slaves when He said:

﴿هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ مِن قَبۡلُ﴾

"It is He (Allah) who has named you Muslims before…" [22:78]

The Quran has also explained to us that the message of all Prophets was to invite to Islam and whoever followed them was from amongst the Muslims. In regards to the Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) the Quran states:

﴿وَأُمِرۡتُ أَنۡ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ﴾

"And I have been commanded to be among the Muslims." [10:72]

And in regards to the Prophet Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them)

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

﴿ رَبَّنَا وَٱجۡعَلۡنَا مُسۡلِمَيۡنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةٗ مُّسۡلِمَةٗ لَّكَ ﴾

"Our Lord! and make us Muslims and of Our offspring a Muslim nation for you." [2:128]

And in regards to the Prophet Jacob's (peace be upon him) advice to his children the Quran states:

﴿ أَمۡ كُنتُمۡ شُهَدَآءَ إِذۡ حَضَرَ يَعۡقُوبَ ٱلۡمَوۡتُ إِذۡ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعۡبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِيۖ قَالُواْ نَعۡبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ إِلَٰهٗا وَٰحِدٗا وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ مُسۡلِمُونَ ١٣٣ ﴾

"Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, 'What will you worship after me?' They said: "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac – one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." [2:133]

And in regards to the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him)

﴿ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَٰقَوۡمِ إِن كُنتُمۡ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ فَعَلَيۡهِ تَوَكَّلُوٓاْ إِن كُنتُم مُّسۡلِمِينَ ٨٤ ﴾

"And Moses said: 'O My people! If you have believed In Allah, Then put Your trust In Him if you are Muslims' (those who submit to Allah's Will)." [10:84]

And in regards to the Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him)

﴿ تَوَفَّنِي مُسۡلِمٗا وَأَلۡحِقۡنِي بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴾

"Cause me to die as a Muslim (the one submitting to Your will), and join me with the righteous." [12:101]

And in regards to the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him)

﴿ أَلَّا تَعۡلُواْ عَلَيَّ وَأۡتُونِي مُسۡلِمِينَ ٣١ ﴾

"Be not haughty against Me, but come to Me as Muslims (true believers who submit to Allah with full submission)" [27:31]

And in regards to the Prophet Lot (peace be upon him)

﴿ فَمَا وَجَدۡنَا فِيهَا غَيۡرَ بَيۡتٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ ٣٦ ﴾

"And We found not within them other than a [single] house of Muslims." [51:36]

And in regards to the disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him)

﴿ فَلَمَّآ أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنصَارِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ ٱلْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنصَارُ ٱللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَٱشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴾

"Then when Jesus came to know of their disbelief, He said: "Who will be my helpers In Allah's Cause?" The disciples said: "We are the helpers of Allah; we believe In Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims (i.e. we submit to Allah)." [3:52]

So the invitation of the Prophets was an invitation to Islam because their Lord was one and their religion was one even if their sacred laws differed somewhat as we will explain in the upcoming chapters. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The prophets are paternal brothers, their mothers are different but their religion is one."(1)

Therefore the religion of Allah that all Prophets came with was Islam. Allah says in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمُ ﴾

"Truly, the Religion with Allah is Islam." [3:19]

And Allah will not accept any religion from his creation other than that of Islam as He said in the Quran:

﴿ وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

"And whoever seeks a Religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and In the Hereafter He will be one of the losers." [3:85]

Fourth: The Pillars of Islam

Islam is a large structure that combines many different aspects of human life and such a structure requires a foundation and pillars that it rests upon. These were made clear to us by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when he said:

"Islam has been built upon five things. Testifying that there is no deity but Allah, and that Mohammed is His Messenger; on performing five-daily prayers; on giving the poor due; on pilgrimage to the House; and on fasting during Ramadan."(2)

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

The First Pillar: To bear witness that there is no deity but Allah and that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) is His Messenger.

This testimony is the foundation of Islam and everyone who wants to enter Islam must profess it verbally. It is made up of two main pillars.

First: There is no deity but Allah.

This means that there is nothing in existence worthy of worship, except Allah the Glorified and Exalted. This negates the worship of anything but Allah, including angels, prophets, pious people, trees, the sun, the moon, stones and statues and graves because all these things are the creation of Allah the Lord of the Worlds, so how can a created person worship a created thing similar to them and abandon worship of the creator. Therefore, this proves that worship is only for Allah the Lord of the Worlds to whom the whole world and whatever it contains have submitted. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَأُوْلُواْ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمَۢا بِٱلْقِسْطِۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ١٨ ﴾

"Allah bears witness that Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the Right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining his creation In justice. Lâ Ilâh illa Huwa (none has the Right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." [3:18]

From this we understand that the statement 'There is no deity but Allah' is the epitome and slogan of Islam and the key to entering it because it means that the person acknowledges his obedience and compliance with the worship of Allah and disowns and rids himself of the worship of anyone or anything else.

Second: Mohammed (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah

This testimony includes three very important principles which are:

1) Acknowledging that Allah sent the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) with the truth as a giver of glad tidings and warner to all people, Arab and non-Arab, white and black, to call them to the worship of Allah alone and reject polytheism and disbelief. Allah has said:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴾

"And we have not sent you (O Mohammed) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind." [34:28]

2) It is obligatory to believe everything the Prophet (peace be upon him) has informed us about since it is a revelation from Allah, as Allah has said:

﴿ وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ ﴿٣﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْىٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ ﴾

"Nor does He speak of (his own) desire. It is Only an Inspiration that is inspired." [53:3-4]

3) It is obligatory to obey the Prophet (peace be upon him) in everything that he has commanded us and avoid everything that he has forbidden and rejected because he is someone who brings information from Allah, and Allah has commanded that we obey him (peace be upon him), as Allah said:

﴿ وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ﴾

"And whatsoever the Messenger (Mohammed) gives you, take it, and whatsoever He forbids you, abstain from it." [59:7]

The Second Pillar: Establishing al-Salah (the five-daily prayers)

Salah is a form of worship that combines specific statements and actions that are initiated by saying the *Takbeer* (announcing the greatness of Allah) and concluded by the *Salam* (final salutation) and it is the foundation of the religion and the first action to be accounted for on the Day of Judgment. Allah has commanded it in the following verse:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَٰبًا مَّوْقُوتًا ﴾

"Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours." [4:103]

Due to its high rank and greatness, Allah the Exalted prescribed it upon us from the heavens during the miraculous journey of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him).

The prayer should be performed with sincerity, reverence and submission of the heart; while complying with its conditions, pillars, obligations and recommended practices. Whoever performs it in this way it will serve as a light for them, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) informed us when he said:

"The five prescribed prayers are a light"

This means that it will guide the performer to the correct path and lighten his way and safeguard him from committing sins and shameful actions. As Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنۡهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلۡفَحۡشَآءِ وَٱلۡمُنكَرِۗ﴾

"Verily, the prayer prevents from shameful and unjust deeds."[29:45]

The Third Pillar: Giving al-Zakah (Alms Tax for needy)

Al-Zakah is the obligatory amount taken out due to a person's having earned that which reaches the minimum amount required with specific conditions. It will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

It is an obligation upon all wealthy Muslims to pay to their deserving brethren in faith who are poor and destitute and others that Allah has mentioned in the following verse of the Quran:

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلصَّدَقَٰتُ لِلۡفُقَرَآءِ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلۡعَٰمِلِينَ عَلَيۡهَا وَٱلۡمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمۡ وَفِي ٱلرِّقَابِ وَٱلۡغَٰرِمِينَ
وَفِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِۖ فَرِيضَةٗ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ٦٠﴾

"Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); and for to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's Cause and for the wayfarer; a duty imposed by Allah. and Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise." [9:60]

It is done out of obedience to the commandment of Allah the Exalted and kindness towards His creation. Through this a person cleanses his soul from sins and purifies it from stinginess and selfishness, as stated by Allah in the Quran:

﴿خُذۡ مِنۡ أَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡ صَدَقَةٗ تُطَهِّرُهُمۡ وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيۡهِمۡۖ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ سَكَنٞ لَّهُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ١٠٣﴾

"Take alms from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of security for them, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower." [9:103]

Zakah is not a favour from one person to another, rather it is the right of Allah over this wealth and Allah does not accept unless it is free from all bad manners and characteristics such as arrogance, pride and recounting favours that a person does for the poor. Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مَنًّا وَلَآ أَذًى ۙ لَّهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٢٦٢) ۞ قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَآ أَذًى ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
غَنِىٌّ حَلِيمٌ (٢٦٣) يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُبْطِلُوا۟ صَدَقَٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ وَٱلْأَذَىٰ ﴾

"Those who spend their wealth In the cause of Allah, and do not follow up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, their reward is with their Lord on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. Kind words and forgiving of faults are better than charity followed by injury and Allah is rich (Free of All wants) and He is Most-Forbearing. O You who believe! Do not render in vain your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury." [2:262-264]

By fulfilling this great obligation, the Muslim society achieves many forms of mercy towards one another and cohesion, thus its unity, harmony, and solidarity are preserved.

The Fourth Pillar: The Fast of Ramadan

It is defined as completely refraining from the consumption of food, drink and sexual relations from sunrise until sunset with the intention of worshipping Allah.

Fasting is an action that causes a Muslim to advance because it strengthens his character. Thus, on the one hand, it increases him in being conscious of Allah, and in distance from everything that Allah has forbidden. And on the other hand, it leads to control over his desires and a loss of drifting behind his desires and whims, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (١٨٣) ﴾

"O you who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious and conscious of Allah". [2:183]

As for the one who fasts and prohibits his body from food and drink, yet permits for his tongue and limbs the commission of disobedience and sin, then Allah is not in need of his fasting, as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has said:

"Whoever does not give up forged speech, evil actions and ignorance, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink."[1]

Furthermore, the person who fasts learns to empathise with their brothers who are poor or needy and cannot find enough food or drink to suffice their needs. The fasting person feels the devastation caused by hunger and thirst, even though they are able to eat and drink, so they learn to appreciate the difficulties of those who are unable to satisfy their needs and they are motivated to be generous towards them and spend on them.

The Fifth Pillar: Pilgrimage to the House of Allah, the Holy Sanctuary

It is defined as setting out for Makkah in specific months for specific actions. The pilgrimage is a physical act of worship that Allah has obligated at least once in a person's lifetime in response to the divine order with which Allah commanded the Prophet Abraham:

﴿ وَأَذِّن فِى ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِن كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ ٢٧ ﴾

"And proclaim to mankind the Hajj they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, they will come from every deep and distant mountain highway." [22:27]

In the circumambulation of the Muslims around the House of Allah during Hajj, is the display of the subservience to Allah and belief in His oneness, freeing them from the dazzle of this world, in full humility and submission to Allah with the constant repetition of the call to belief in the oneness of Allah repeating: "Here I am, O Allah, at Your service; you have no partner, here I am O Allah." In Hajj the equality and unity between all Muslims becomes clear with all wearing one form of clothing, making one call and standing on one plain irrespective of their colour, origin or condition.

This, dear reader is Islam and these are its great pillars and whoever fulfils them completely will taste the sweetness of faith and be deserving of forgiveness from The Most Merciful. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The one who has tasted the sweetness of belief is he who is content with Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion and Mohammed as a Messenger.

And he said: **"He who is content with Allah as Lord, Islam as a religion, and Mohammed as a Prophet, paradise is inevitable for him."**

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

Fifth: The Relationship between Islam and other revealed religions

Since all of these revealed religions have been sent down from Allah, we find that their principles and objectives are in agreement, as we find stated in the Quran:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ﴾

"He has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Noah, and that which we have inspired in you and that which we ordained for Abraham, Moses and Jesus) saying: You should establish Religion and make no divisions in it." [42:13]

1) All divine messages call to one main principle: to believe in Allah the Exalted and His oneness and to renounce worship of anyone beside Him.

2) All messages agree on the adoption of whatever connects people with good and keeps them far away from evil.

3) All messages call towards holding on to noble values and upright conduct.

4) As for their legislation and practical rulings, the divine messages differed in their methodologies and ways of performance, as Allah has informed us:

﴿لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا﴾

"To each among you, we have prescribed a Law and a clear way."[5:48]

And this difference refers to the differences in the natures, needs, conditions, times and places of various peoples.

For example, the laws of all divine religions enjoin prayer , however they differed in how to perform them, and their form varied from law to law.

In the same way, fasting was enjoined in each of their laws, however its manner also varied from one law to another.

Here is an important point which is essential to stop at- Allah the Glorified and Exalted took a pledge from the previous nations to care for their scriptures which He revealed to them and He entrusted them with their preservation, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ ۚ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلرَّبَّـٰنِيُّونَ وَٱلْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا ٱسْتُحْفِظُوا۟ مِن كِتَـٰبِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَآءَ﴾

Verily, we did send down the Torah, therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah's will, judged the Jews. And the rabbis and the priests [too judged the Jews by the Torah after those Prophets] for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto." [5:44)]

There was none among them except desires and love for the worldly life overcame them so they stretched their hands towards those books altering and changing their Holy Scriptures according to what their desires and wishes dictated to the point that their scriptures no longer reflected what Allah wanted of them, so they became untrustworthy and undependable.

In fact, the Quran has informed us of this attack on the Holy Scriptures in the following verse:

﴿ يَـٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَـٰبِ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمۡ كَثِيرٗا مِّمَّا كُنتُمۡ تُخۡفُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَـٰبِ ﴾

"O People of the Scripture now has come to you our Messenger explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture." [5:15]

And Allah the Exalted said:

﴿مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُواْ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلۡكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِۦ ﴾

"Among those who are Jews, there are some who displace words from (their) right places." [4:46]

And Allah also said:

﴿ فَوَيۡلٞ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكۡتُبُونَ ٱلۡكِتَـٰبَ بِأَيۡدِيهِمۡ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَـٰذَا مِنۡ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ لِيَشۡتَرُواْ بِهِۦ ثَمَنٗا قَلِيلٗاۖ فَوَيۡلٞ لَّهُم مِّمَّا كَتَبَتۡ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَوَيۡلٞ لَّهُم مِّمَّا يَكۡسِبُونَ ٧٩ ﴾

"Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and Then say, "This is from Allah," to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn thereby." [2:79]

As the religion of Islam, which Mohammed (peace be upon him) came with, is the seal of all divine religions, Allah the Exalted made the Holy Quran prevail over all previous Holy Scriptures. Thus the Quran testifies to what is in them of facts and principles and nullifies what those who altered the texts ascribed to them, and what their hands added to it of fabrications. The Quran prevails over them, in other words, as a witness, a verifier, in being reliable, and trustworthy.

For that reason, Allah has taken it upon Himself to preserve this religion from any alterations and fabrications until the Last Hour as He has stated in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

"Verily We: it is we who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Quran) and surely, we will guard it (from corruption)." [15:9]

As a result, there is no book to be revealed after the Quran and there is no prophet to be sent after Mohammed (peace be upon him). So if Allah did not preserve the seal of the divine laws (Islam), then the religion of Allah would be lost forever due to the trifling hands of men. For this reason it is obligatory upon everyone who hears about Islam and understands it to believe in it even if they follow other religions. And those who do not believe in and follow it are not described as Muslims, as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has stated:

"By the One in whose hand is the soul of Mohammad, there is no one among this nation, Jew or Christian, who hears of me than dies without believing in that with which I have been sent, but he will be one of the people of Hellfire."[(1)]

(1) Transmitted by Sahih Muslim.

Chapter Two

The Faith of a Muslim

Attaching the Heart to Allah

Indeed the heart of a believer experiences joy in this world and the hereafter, however this heart-felt happiness and complete delight is not realized except through love and knowledge of Allah the Exalted; coming closer to him through the actions that He loves and are pleasing to Him and refraining from everything that angers Him and invokes His wrath.

First: The heart of a believer is between fear, hope and love.

Indeed the heart is in need of becoming attached to its creator, in order or to guarantee its progression on the path that is designed for it. What are most important in propelling a slave and advancing his course towards Allah, and urging him towards obedience and commitment are the actions of the heart. The greatest of these actions is to love Allah, to have hope in Him and to fear Him.

Thus the believing slave does not have in his heart but love of Allah and His Messenger, love for what Allah and His Messenger love- and it is love for acts of obedience and worship- and love for the monotheistic slaves of Allah, as we find in a Prophetic tradition that states:

"Three things whoever has them will find the sweetness of belief: that Allah and His Messenger are more beloved to him than any thing else, that he loves a person solely for the sake of Allah, and that he hates to revert to disbelief, as he hates being thrown in to hellfire."(1)

The believer should possess fear of Allah the Exalted in his heart; that fear which makes the heart tremble from falling into the anger of Allah, His vengeance, and His severe punishment when it commits what Allah has prohibited or neglects what He has obligated. Thus the heart can be a preventative force for the believer from following his desires, drifting behind his whims, and instead urges him to be someone who is committed to obeying Him and His commands.

The heart of the believing slave also has hope of obtaining the mercy, satisfaction, love, reward and bounties of Allah in this world and the Hereafter. Hope encourages the believer to persevere in obedience to Allah and to race towards good deeds because his heart is attached to the bounties that Allah has promised the fearful, obedient ones of His slaves. Allah the Exalted has said:

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(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَرۡجُونَ رَحۡمَتَ ٱللَّهِۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ﴿٢١٨﴾ ﴾

"Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's religion) and have striven hard In the Way of Allah, All These hope for Allah's Mercy. and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful." [2:218]

The heart of a Muslim in their journey to Allah should always maintain a balance between these three things. If one of them should overpower another then the believer will be diverted in his worship and lose course from the Straight Path. Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) stated: "The heart in its journey to Allah is similar to a bird. Love is its head and hope and fear are its wings". Therefore, imagine dear reader if this bird was to lose one of its wings or its head there is no doubt that it would become easy bait for every predator or scavenger.

The Muslim who performs what Allah has commanded of acts of obedience ought to accept their performance with love and a desire to draw closer to his Lord, hoping that He accepts them, and desiring His reward, bounty, and paradise. They must aspire to perform what Allah has commanded just as He commanded, fearful that He may reject them and not accept them, and fearful of His punishment and anger upon neglecting it.

Know, may Allah have mercy on you, that balancing between these three stations is the way of the Prophets (peace be upon them) as Allah the Exalted has informed us in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِي ٱلۡخَيۡرَٰتِ وَيَدۡعُونَنَا رَغَبٗا وَرَهَبٗاۖ وَكَانُواْ لَنَا خَٰشِعِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ ﴾

"Verily, they used to hasten on to do good deeds, and they used to call on us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before us." [21:90]

Second: The heart of a believer is conscious of the immense greatness of Allah

From the most important things that must be established in the heart of a believer is consciousness of the immense greatness of Allah the most Exalted. It is the consciousness of this greatness that causes the heart to be attentive and vigilant, fearing Allah in all of his actions and words. Thus he will not approach what angers Allah, and he will seek to obey His commands.

The Majestic Quran has informed that the polytheists only dared to ascribe partners to Allah and commit disbelief because they were not conscious of the greatness of Allah. Thus their hearts hardened and became like stone and they put the Creator and the creation on the same level, as Allah the Exalted has stated:

﴿ وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ مَطْوِيَّٰتٌۢ
بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾

"They made not a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be grasped by His Hand and the heavens will be rolled up in his Right hand. Glorified is he, and High is He above all that they associate as partners with him!" [39:67]

And Allah the Glorified and Exalted has rebuked those in whose hearts the awe of Allah was weak, by saying in the Quran:

﴿ مَّا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

"What is the matter with you, [That you fear not Allah (his punishment), and] you hope not for reward (from Allah or you believe not in his Oneness)." [71:13]

The commentators on the Quran have stated that this means, "What is the matter with you that you do not revere Allah as much as His greatness deserves?"

Now, my fellow Muslim, you might ask: how can I be conscious of the greatness of Allah in my heart? The Quran guides us the ways and means of how the believer becomes conscious of the greatness of Allah the Exalted in his heart and mind; and among the most important of these means, and their greatest is:

1) To observe and reflect upon the kingdom of Allah and the greatness of His creation.

Whenever the Muslim looks at and reflects on this expansive and great kingdom that increases him in reverence for the one who created and fashioned him; and for this reason Allah the Exalted calls upon those who possess sound intellects to such reflection and contemplation in order for them to arrive at the greatness, might, and Lordship of Allah. Thus they are guided by that towards His divinity and right to be worshiped alone without a partner. Allah says in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا
بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾ ﴾

"Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, Glory to You! (Exalted be You above All that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire." [3:190-191]

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

" Woe to the one who reads this verse and does not reflect on it. " [1]

And Allah the Exalted said:

﴿أَفَلَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَى ٱلْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ﴿١٨﴾ وَإِلَى ٱلْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"Do they not look at the camels, how they are created? And at the heaven, how it is raised? And at the mountains, how they are rooted and fixed firm? And at the earth, how it is spread out?" [88:17-20]

Look at the sky above you and contemplate on its clarity and the sparkling of the stars to appreciate the wonder involved in its creation and the supreme greatness of its creator. Contemplate on how it changes from night into day and from clear skies to cloudy skies and from the solar eclipse to the lunar eclipse so that your heart is filled with the greatness of He who created and organized it and He who made it a sign for those one who fears the position of his Lord and His threats of punishment. Contemplate its extensiveness, the greatness of its creation, and the precision of its making in order to grasp the greatness of its creator. Abdullah ibn Masood (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"Between the first heaven and the one above it is a distance of five hundred years. Between each of the heavens is a distance of five hundred years. Between the seventh heaven and the Footstool is a distance of five hundred years. Between the Footstool and the water is a distance of five hundred years, and the Throne is above the water. Allah is above the Throne, and nothing whatsoever of your deeds is hidden from Him.

If you are amazed at the expanse of the sky then you should be amazed at how it is held up without any pillars. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى رَفَعَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا﴾

"Allah is He who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see." [13:2]

(1) Transmitted by Ibn Hibbaan.

Reflect on how the day follows the night; so that you are able appreciate the greatness of the favor Allah bestowed upon His creation. Allah has said:

﴿قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِضِيَآءٍ ۖ أَفَلَا
تَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلنَّهَارَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ
يَأْتِيكُم بِلَيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ فِيهِ ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

"Say (O Mohammed): "Tell Me! If Allah made night continuous for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is an Ilâh (a god) besides Allah who could bring You light? Will you not then hear?" Say (O Mohammed): "Tell Me! if Allah made day continuous for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is an Ilâh (a god) besides Allah who could bring you night wherein you rest? Will you not then see?"[28"71-72]

So what would the creation do if the sun did not rise? And what would humankind do if the moon did not appear? How would they work? How would they farm? How would they sleep? How would they farm? How would they be able to do anything?

Reflect on the moon which Allah has made as among the most amazing signs for all of us. First of all it appears in the sky as a thin line then its brightness increases until it becomes a full moon shining clearly in the sky, then it reduces in size until it reverts to its previous nature. Allah has made it in this way to serve as a timetable for people in their living and worship and at the same time it is a model of beauty and light which poets have extolled in their poetry. Truly all of that is proof of the greatness of its creator, the Glorified and Exalted.

When you look at the earth that you live on and whose paths you traverse, at how Allah the Exalted has levelled it and made it flat, and produced in it the provisions and nourishment of people, and at how He has fixed the earth in place with towering, lofty mountains.. Look around in the earth at the amazing plants and fruits- it brings out vegetation of different colours, plants of different flavours, yet from the same soil.

Dear believer reflect on the nature of these great mountains and stand in front of them in all their height and might in order to become conscious of some of the greatness of Allah who created them. Allah said:

﴿وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

"And among the mountains are streaks white and red, of varying colours and (others) very black." [35:27]

These are mountains that the Almighty will one day turn into dust, as He says in the Quran:

﴿ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنسِفُهَا رَبِّى نَسْفًا ﴿١٠٥﴾ فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا ﴿١٠٦﴾ لَّا تَرَىٰ فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَآ
أَمْتًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ ﴾

"And they ask you concerning the mountains, say; "My Lord will blast them and scatter them as particles of dust. Then He shall leave it as a level smooth plain. "You will see therein nothing crooked or curved." [20:105-107]

And Allah said:

﴿ وَتَكُونُ ٱلْجِبَالُ كَٱلْعِهْنِ ٱلْمَنفُوشِ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾

"And the mountains will be like carded wool." [101:05]

2) Reflecting on the human body and the marvel of its design.

If a Muslim wants to increase further in their appreciation of the greatness of Allah and for their heart to grow fonder of Him all they have to do is to look at themselves and how they have been constructed. Ponder on the precision and marvel of how Allah has designed the human from the time that they are conceived to the time that they pass away from this world. Allah has illustrated this for us in the Quran:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِى رَيْبٍ مِّنَ ٱلْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ
مِن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَنُقِرُّ فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَآءُ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ
طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوٓا۟ أَشُدَّكُمْ ۖ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرْذَلِ ٱلْعُمُرِ
لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْـًٔا ﴾

"O humankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily we have created you (i.e. Adam) from dust, then from mixed drops of male and female sexual discharge i.e. offspring of Adam, then from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood) then from a little lump of flesh, some formed and some unformed (miscarriage), that we may make (it) clear to you (i.e. to show you our power and ability to do what we will). And we cause whom we will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then we bring you out as infants, then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength and among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known." [22:5]

And Allah said:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مِن سُلَـٰلَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَـٰهُ نُطْفَةً فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا ٱلنُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْمُضْغَةَ عِظَـٰمًا فَكَسَوْنَا ٱلْعِظَـٰمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَـٰهُ خَلْقًا ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ ٱلْخَـٰلِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

And indeed we created man (Adam) out of an extract of clay. Thereafter we made him (the offspring of Adam) as sperm (and lodged it) In a safe lodging (womb of the woman). Then we made the sperm into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), Then we made the clot into a little lump of flesh, Then we made out of that little lump of flesh bones, Then we clothed the bones with flesh, and Then we brought it forth as another creation. So blessed be Allah, the best of creators. [23:12-14]

Then ponder and reflect on the inner aspects of the human body. How Allah has put together systems and mechanisms in the body that function in a way that humankind cannot even begin to fathom the creativity and precision involved. The heart works night and day without ever stopping. The senses are aware of what occurs around them from what is seen, heard and felt. The brain manages all feelings and actions of humans from their feeling happy and sad, their laughing and crying, their standing and sitting, to their sleeping and waking. Ponder, dear believer how Allah created you, so that the greatness of Allah enters your heart and causes you to increase in your respect and love of Him and appreciate the wisdom of what Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

And also in your own selves will you not then see?

Indeed this invitation from Allah to ponder is specifically for you dear Muslim and for all people in general, so that the love, respect, and oneness of Allah becomes established in the heart. Thus hearts become attached to their Lord, their creator, their provider, and the disposer of their affairs.

3) Continuously reciting the Holy Quran

The Holy Quran is the Book of Allah and His message to all humanity. It contains accounts of those before us and news of what will happen after us. It never ceases to amaze nor do its miracles end. Allah has made it the light and guidance for all, as He states in the Quran:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيۡبَۛ فِيهِۛ هُدٗى لِّلۡمُتَّقِينَ ٢ ﴾

"This is the Book whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are pious and fear Allah." [2:2]

And Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ يَهۡدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقۡوَمُ ﴾

"Verily, This Quran guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to the believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a great reward." [17:9]

Indeed reflecting on the verses of the Quran is one of the greatest of ways to vitalize hearts and attach them to their Lord. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ أَمۡ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقۡفَالُهَآ ٢٤ ﴾

Do they not then think deeply in the Quran, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?

For indeed Allah revealed the Quran and made it a source of healing for the hearts and bodies as Allah has said:

﴿ وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٞ وَرَحۡمَةٞ لِّلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴾

"And we send down from the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe." [17:82]

So how can soft hearts not become humbled by the words of their Lord when hard, solid objects submit and are humbled by them, as Allah has said:

﴿ لَوۡ أَنزَلۡنَا هَٰذَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٖ لَّرَأَيۡتَهُۥ خَٰشِعٗا مُّتَصَدِّعٗا مِّنۡ خَشۡيَةِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَتِلۡكَ ٱلۡأَمۡثَٰلُ نَضۡرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٢١ ﴾

"Had we sent down This Quran on a mountain, You would surely have seen it humbling itself and rending asunder by the fear of Allah such are the parables which we put forward to mankind that they may reflect." [59:14]

A person who loves something and attaches his heart to it always remembers and speaks about that thing and whoever reads the Quran with continuity this is a sign that their hearts are pure and attached to Allah. So they never become bored or

cease reading and reflecting on the verses of the Quran. Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"If your hearts became pure you would never be satiated from the words of your Lord."

4) Knowing Allah, the Exalted, through His Names and Attributes

The Muslim who recites the Book of Allah, the Exalted, will realize that there is hardly a verse from among the verses of this mighty Book that lacks mention of a name from among the names of Allah, the Exalted, or an attribute from among His sublime attributes. Rather what Allah, the Exalted, mentions about His names, attributes and actions is more and greater than anything else He mentions from among the matters which mankind depends on in their worldly lives and livelihoods. Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: 'In the Quran, the names, attributes and actions of Allah are mentioned more often than eating, drinking, and marriage in Paradise'.(1) If this demonstrates anything, then it demonstrates the importance of knowing the names and attributes with respect to the Muslim because knowing them engenders in the heart of the believer esteem and love for Allah the Exalted.

Just as knowing [the names, attributes and actions of Allah] engenders respect, awe, fear and reverence for Allah in the heart of the believer, so too does his belief that Allah is well-aware of the actions and words of the slaves, and that what occurs in their hearts is not hidden from Him. Al-`Izz ibn Abd as-Salām (may Allah have mercy on him) said: 'Understanding the significance of the names of Allah is a means to his dealing with their fruits from among fear, hope, reverence, love, trust, and other fruits from knowing the attributes of Allah'.(2)

Knowledge of Allah the Exalted, through His names and attributes engenders in the heart of the believer an increase in faith and steadfastness in certainty. Shaykh Abd ar-Rahman as-Sa`dī (may Allah have mercy on him) said: '[A slave's] faith will be in proportion to his knowledge of His Lord- so whenever knowledge of His Lord increases, his faith increases, and whenever his knowledge decreases, his faith decreases. The nearest path to connect him to [increasing knowledge of Allah] is reflecting upon His names and attributes in the Quran'.(3)

So what is a sufficient amount for a Muslim to know about the names and attributes of Allah in order to harvest the 'fruit', for benefits to materialize, and to attach [the Muslim's] heart to the One and Only who has no equal?

(1) Dar'a Ta`ārud il-`Aql wan-Naql 3/61.
(2) Shajarat al-Ma`ārif wal-'Ahwāl p. 1.
(3) Taysīr al-Karīm ir-Rahman 1/35.

Being truly familiar with Allah through His names and attributes is achieved through the following principles:

A) Each of the Names of Allah, the Exalted, is Most Excellent, and Each of His Attributes is Supreme

Among the ways that the Believing slave respects His Lord is by believing that each of the Names of Allah, the Exalted, is most excellent, and that each of His Attributes, which He described Himself with, is Supreme; affirming what Allah, the Exalted, reported in His Noble Book. He, the Exalted, said:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡأَسۡمَآءُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ فَٱدۡعُوهُ بِهَا﴾

And for Allah are the best names, so call Him by them. [Al-`A'rāf: 180]

﴿قُلِ ٱدۡعُواْ ٱللَّهَ أَوِ ٱدۡعُواْ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنَۖ أَيّٗا مَّا تَدۡعُواْ فَلَهُ ٱلۡأَسۡمَآءُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ﴾

Say: "Call Allah or call the Most Merciful whenever you call, thus for Him are the best names." [Al-'Isrā': 110]

﴿ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَۖ لَهُ ٱلۡأَسۡمَآءُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ ٨﴾

Allah, there is none worthy of worship except Him; for Him are the best names. [Taha: 8]

And also:

﴿هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡخَٰلِقُ ٱلۡبَارِئُ ٱلۡمُصَوِّرُۖ لَهُ ٱلۡأَسۡمَآءُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ﴾

He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper; for Him are the best names. [Al-Hashr: 24]

The significance of a name of Allah being 'Best' is that it is the highest degree of perfection and there is no deficiency in it from any perspective. So there are no [other names] more excellent, perfect, befitting, or exalted than His names; and that is due what they encompass from lofty, befitting meanings and praiseworthy attributes which demonstrate the greatness and sublimity of Allah who is called by them.

B) The path to knowing the names and attributes of Allah

It is impossible for the Muslim to find a more excellent, complete and safer path to knowing the names and attributes of Allah than the Book of Allah the Exalted and the Sunnah (tradition) of His Prophet (peace be upon him) because Allah the Exalted is the one who named Himself with these names and described Himself with these attributes.

So He, glorified is He, is more acquainted with Himself than all of His creation and He taught us that the Noble Quran is the Book of Allah the Exalted to His creation, and that in it is guidance, light, and truth. He taught us that the greatest source for knowing the names and attributes of Allah is the Noble Quran to which falsehood cannot approach, whether from before or behind it, and it was sent down from One who is Wise and Praiseworthy.

He taught us also that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was sent by His Lord, that he did not speak out of desire, and that Allah entrusted him with the important matter of informing mankind of their Lord and announcing to them His religion which He was pleased with for them; He taught us that the authentic Prophetic Sunnah is the other path for knowing the names and attributes of Allah because no one is more knowledgeable with regards to Allah, after Allah the Exalted, than His trusted messenger (peace be upon him) Imam Ahmad, (may have mercy on him) said: ‘Allah is not to be described except with what He described Himself with, or what His Messenger (peace be upon him) described Him with, while not going beyond the Quran and Hadith’.(1)

C) The position of the Muslim with regards to the names and attributes of Allah

It is necessary for a Muslim to adhere to the true methodology and the correct path in belief with regards to the names and attributes of Allah; and that belief does not materialize except through the following matters:

1) The affirmation of what Allah affirmed for Himself or what His messenger (peace be upon him) affirmed for Him from among the names and attributes and denial of what Allah denied about Himself or what His messenger (peace be upon him) denied about Him because there is no one more knowledgeable about Allah than Allah the Exalted.

﴿قُلْ ءَأَنتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ ٱللَّهُ﴾

“Say: Are you more knowledgeable or Allah?”[2:140]

Just as there is no one more knowledgeable about Allah after Allah than His messenger (peace be upon him) about whom Allah said:

﴿وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ ۝٣ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْىٌ يُوحَىٰ ۝٤﴾

“And he does not speak out of desire. Indeed it is but a revelation inspired.”[53:3-4]

(1) Majmu al-Fatawa 5/26.

2) The consideration that Allah the Exalted is far above being likened to His creation, as He the Exalted said:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِۦ شَىْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾﴾

"There is nothing like Him at all; and He All-Hearing, All-Seeing." [42:11]

So Allah the Exalted is not similar to anything, and He has no equal in His creation, rather He, glorified is He, is the one characterized with the sublime and perfect attributes which are not suitable for anyone except Him, glorified and the Exalted.

3) The absence of aspiring to perceive the nature of the attributes of Allah because they are from the knowledge of the Unseen which Allah alone possesses knowledge of; and the intellect is incapable of perceiving that which is Unseen, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِۦ عِلْمًا ﴿١١٠﴾﴾

"And they cannot encompass him in knowledge."[20:110]

And He, the Glorified, said:

﴿هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُۥ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾﴾

Do you know of any equal for Him?[19:65]

D) Glorification of Allah the Exalted through His names and attributes

Truly from among the greatest indications of the glorification of the slave for Allah the Exalted and [greatest indication of] a link in his heart with Him is that the effect of belief in the names and attributes of Allah appears in his life and in his character. The truehearted believer is he who worships Allah the Exalted through His names and attributes, and among the ways of doing that are:

1) Calling upon Allah by His names and attributes

Indeed from the exaltation and glorification of Allah the Exalted is for the Muslim to turn toward Him through supplication with his heart and limbs, in obedience to His command, as He, lofty is His praise, said:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ فَٱدْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِىٓ أَسْمَٰٓئِهِۦ﴾

"And for Allah are Good names, so call Him by them and abandon those who disbelieve in His names."[7:180]

Calling upon Allah the Exalted by His names and attributes is of two types:

First is the supplication of worship. What it means is that mankind is a worshipper of Allah the Exalted by any categorical act of worship, whether heart-based, as in having fear, hope, love, and trust; bodily [worship] as in prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, recitation of the Quran, glorification and remembrance; or wealth-based [worship] as in obligatory charity, voluntary charity and sacrifice.

From the supplication of worship is: remembering Allah the Exalted praising Him, thanking Him, and glorifying Him through His names and whatever is appropriate of the attributes which He taught us.

So the Muslim says: 'Glory be to Allah', 'All praise is due to Allah', 'There is none worthy of worship except Allah', and 'Allah is great'; each of these is glorification and praise of Allah, and are calls to Allah the Exalted through His names and attributes as a way of worshipping Him, glorified is He.

So the supplication of worship does not contain any request, rather its only purpose is to worship Allah the Exalted through praising Him and being pleased with mentioning His names and attributes.

Second is the supplication dealing with an issue. It is when the slave seeks from his Lord what benefits him and he asks Him to divert what harms him from a matter of the life of this world or the Afterlife; like asking Allah the Exalted for forgiveness of sins, or mercy, or guidance and success, or the achievement of paradise and rescue from the Hell-Fire.

These two types of supplication - of the act of worship and dealing with an issue - are linked. For every questioner who asks Allah the Exalted and asks Him with sincerity, fear, hope and love, then this is an act of worship; and the one who remembers Allah the Exalted by definition is seeking and asking Allah the Exalted for an elevation in status, an increase in good deeds, and pardon from sins, and this is the supplication of dealing with issues.

2) Calling Allah the Exalted by His greatest name

From the great favour of Allah upon His monotheist slaves is that He distinguished from among His good names, glorified and the exalted a name that a monotheist slave would not call Him by it except that Allah responds to his call and grants his request. And there is no doubt that the persistence of the Muslim in calling Allah the Exalted by this name is among the most important ways the heart of the believer is connected to his Lord. On authority of Abdullah ibn Buraidah, on authority of his father, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) heard a man saying:

'Oh Allah, truly I ask You that I bear witness that You are Allah who there is none worthy of worship except You, the One, the Eternal, who does not beget and is not begotten, and for whom there can be no equal'.

So the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'By He in whose Hand is the soul of Mohammed, indeed he asked Allah by His greatest Name which when asked by it, He grants, and when called by it, He responds'.(1)

On authority of Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him): He was with the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) sitting and a man prayed and then supplicated:

'Oh Allah, truly I ask You in that for You is all praise, there is none worthy of worship except You, the Giver of All Good, Maker of the heavens and the earth; Oh Possessor of Sublimity and Honour, Oh Ever-Living, Oh Eternal…' So the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'Indeed he has called Allah by His great Name which when called by it, He responds, and when asked by it, He grants'.(2)

So contemplate, oh Muslim, and call Allah the Exalted by these great supplications. If you praise Allah the Exalted remember Him, glorify Him, and call Him by His good names and supreme attributes, rather by His great name, you have a hope of response to your supplication and materialization of your issue, and you have been promised a response based on it. So there is no greater way to connect your heart with your Lord, to moisten your tongue with His remembrance, praise Him, and ask Him than through what is earned by a person from [utilizing] the names and attributes.

3) Adorning oneself with what Allah the Exalted loves of the attributes

Truly from among the prerequisites of belief in the names and attributes of Allah is that the believer adorn himself with attributes which Allah the Exalted loves such as being attributed to knowledge, justice, mercy, peace, forgiveness, alongside his keeping far away from attributes which anger Allah the Exalted and which are not suitable except for Him glorified is He such as pride, majesty, omnipotence, and subjugation. On authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Allah the Exalted said: "Pride is My robe and majesty is My lower garment. So whoever tries to divest Me of a single one of them, I will throw him into Hell-Fire".(3)

So the Muslim adorning himself with characteristics beloved to Allah the Exalted and his staying far away from characteristics which anger Allah are a veritable proof of the establishment of belief in his heart, and that heart is connected with Allah in esteem, praiseworthiness, and high regard.

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i in al-Kubra, and Ibn Majah.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and an-Nasa'i.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Majah.

E) Whoever counts [the names of Allah] will enter paradise

Indeed from among the greatest springs of belief is knowledge of the Good names of Allah the Exalted. The slave's knowledge of the names of Allah is a reason for his entering paradise and since none but the believers enter it, the slave's knowledge of the names of Allah is a means to the requisite belief for [entering] paradise, and it serves as a source for his strength and perseverance.

On authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

'Indeed for Allah are 99 names- a hundred less one. Whoever counts them will enter paradise'.[1]

The meaning of 'whoever counts [the names of Allah]' is that one 'memorizes them', 'understands their significance', 'is aware of their indications', and 'acts according to them', thus one remembers Allah the Exalted calls Him by them, imitates their example, and adopts their characteristics. Whoever obtains this as a state of being with the Good names of Allah purifies his soul, rectifies his deeds, and increases in obedience, reverence, fear, and love for his Master. In such a manner, the Muslim becomes aware that Allah is with him in every circumstance, so it generates in his heart a kind of supervision of Allah the Exalted which safeguards him from the whispers of demons, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوۡاْ إِذَا مَسَّهُمۡ طَٰٓئِفٞ مِّنَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ تَذَكَّرُواْ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبۡصِرُونَ ٢٠١ ﴾

"Indeed those who fear [Allah], when an insinuation from the Devil befalls them, they remember [Allah], then they are of those who perceive [guidance]."[7:201]

In conclusion my fellow Muslim:

You are involved in favour after favour- Allah has bestowed upon you the favour of belief and guidance and averted you from falling into the Fire of people who are astray and sinful. So praise Allah for His favour, and ask Him for more out of His grace.

Know that your happiness with this favour is not complete except when your heart is freed for Allah. You are learning in this rushed, hurried work how to connect your heart with Allah, so be persistent in sincerity and actions in order that you might taste the sweetness of faith and the delight of obedience [to Allah].

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

The Oneness of Allah and its Categories

The first obligation required for a Muslim is to know and attain faith in Oneness of Allah. According to Allah, there is no salvation for the slave without attaining it, acting according to its dictates and applying it. Faith in the Oneness of Allah is the first thing the slave will be asked about in his grave and on the Day of Judgment upon meeting Allah; and for this reason Allah the Exalted revealed the Scriptures, and sent all the Messengers (peace be upon them) to invite to it, as He stated in the Quran:

﴿وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدُونِ ٢٥﴾

"And we did not send any messenger before you but we inspired him (saying): Lâ ilâha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)], so worship me (alone and none else)." [21:25]

In this chapter we will clarify the definition of Tawheed, its branches, virtues, the meaning of the declaration of the Oneness of Allah- "There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah"-, its conditions, and what negates faith in the Oneness of Allah, such as ascribing partners to Allah and its numerous forms. We will then conclude with a look at what constitutes a major sin, the difference between the major and minor sins and their effects in this world and the Hereafter.

First: Who is Allah the Exalted?

He is Allah the One and Only who has not given birth, nor was He born; the one described with Attributes of perfection and majesty; the one who is free from any defect or deficiency who does not resemble anyone from His creation; the Creator of the universe and the one who arranges its affairs. He is the one from whom nothing on earth or in heaven it is hidden and nothing happens without His permission. Allah is full of favour and bounties towards His slaves, who is alone in deserving of all acts of worship, and who will gather His slaves for judgment on a Day about which there is no doubt.

Second: The Definition of Faith in the Oneness of Allah

It is the belief that Allah is alone in His Lordship, His divinity and His perfect Names and Attributes.

Third: The Categories of Faith in the Oneness of Allah

There are three categories of faith in the Oneness of Allah, and they are:

i) Faith in the Oneness of the Lordship of Allah

ii) Faith in the Oneness of the Divinity of Allah

iii) Faith in the Oneness of the Perfect Names and Attributes of Allah

First: Faith in the Oneness of the Lordship of Allah

It is to single out Allah the Exalted in regards to His actions such as creation, sovereignty, His independence in acting and control, and to believe that Allah is Lord and owner of everything; he is the one who controls the world and acts independently in it, He is the creator of all creation, provides their sustenance, and is the one who grants them life and death, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

"Allah is He who created you, then provided food for you, then will cause you to die, then (again) He will give you life (on the Day of Resurrection). Is there any of your (so-called) partners (of Allah) that do anything of that? Glory be to him and Exalted be He above All that (evil) they associate (with Him)." [30:40]

So there is no Creator, Sovereign, provider or Controller except Allah the Most High, as we find stated in the Quran:

﴿ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْخَلْقُ وَٱلْأَمْرُ ﴾

"His is the creation and Commandment." [7:54]

And Allah said:

﴿ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ﴾

"Know you not that it is Allah to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth?" [2:107]

This category of Oneness for Allah was accepted by the disbelievers in general at the time of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and most religions do not contradict this in principle, as Allah the Exalted has stated in the Quran:

﴿ قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَمَن يُخْرِجُ ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلْحَىِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

"Say "Who provides for You from the sky and from the earth? or who owns hearing and sight? and who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? and who disposes the affairs?" they will say: "Allah." say: "Will You not Then be afraid of Allah's punishment (for setting up rivals In Worship with Allah)?" [10:31]

Therefore, belief in the Oneness of the Lordship of Allah by itself is not sufficient for one to enter into Islam without accepting the other categories of Oneness because whoever is a Lord, Creator, Sustainer, Sovereign and Controller is necessarily a single deity with no partner and acts of worship are not diverted except to Him. It is for this reason that the establishment of faith in the Oneness of the Lordship of Allah in general among the polytheist Arabs was not sufficient, rather Allah ordered and sought from them to single Him out in worship, and it is faith in the Oneness of the Divinity of Allah. Allah made it clear to them that their establishment of Allah alone as the Creator, Sovereign and Controller while worshipping others beside Him was incompatible, as He said in the Quran:

﴿ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ ﴾

"And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allah". How then are they turned away?" [43:87]

In other words, how can you turn away from the worship of Allah alone, without partners?!

Second: Faith in the Oneness of the Divinity of Allah, or Faith in the Oneness of Worship

It is to single out Allah the Exalted for worship and to have the required conviction that He is the only deity deserving of worship and anything else worshipped beside Him is false. It is to believe that He is the one who deserves to be singled out with worship, submission, and absolute obedience, and to not associate any partners with Him in that, no matter who- whether Jesus (peace be upon him) or any other prophet or noble angels, as Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿ وَٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ﴾

"Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship." [4:36]

Therefore all forms of worship are to be diverted to Allah alone including actions of the heart such as fear, hope and reliance, actions of the tongue, such as calling upon and seeking refuge, as well as the physical actions such as the five daily prayers, Hajj and fasting. So there is no one we should fear, have hope in, rely on, supplicate to, seek refuge in, pray to, fast, or make pilgrimages for except Allah the Almighty, as He has stated in the Quran:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُۥ ۖ وَبِذَٰلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾ ﴾

"Say (O Mohammed): "Verily, my Salât (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinns and all that exists). "He has no partner and of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." [6:162-163]

And this category of faith in Oneness is the one that the disbelievers past and present have rejected, as Allah has quoted them saying in the Quran

﴿ أَجَعَلَ ٱلْءَالِهَةَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ عُجَابٌ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾

"Has He made the âliha (gods) (all) into one Ilâh (God - Allah). Verily, this is a curious thing!" [38:5]

For this reason, Allah sent messengers and revealed Holy Books to invite them back to faith in His Oneness, and to single Him out with worship, as He stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ ﴾

And verily, we have sent among every nation a messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) all false deities." [16:36]

Third: Faith in the Oneness of the Perfect Names and Attributes of Allah

It is to believe in every name and attribute that Allah has affirmed for Himself in the Quran or that which was affirmed by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) in authentic narrations. This faith means having the required conviction that Allah alone possesses the best names and highest attributes, that He is the only one described with 'Attributes of Perfection', He is free of any attribute indicating

deficiency, and out of all beings, He is alone in possessing all of that, as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِۦ شَىْءٌۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾﴾

"There is nothing like unto him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer." [42:11]

And He said:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌۢ ﴿٤﴾﴾

"Say (O Mohammed, He is Allah, (the) One Allah-us-Samad (the Self-Sufficient master, whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks). He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable unto him." [112:1-4]

Fourth: The Virtue of Faith in the Oneness of Allah

There are many virtues of having faith in the Oneness of Allah, some of which are:

1) The person who has it will obtain perfect guidance and complete security in this world and the Hereafter, for Allah drives all forms of evil away from those who have faith in His Oneness, in this world and the Hereafter, and favours them with a pure life and security.

2) It is a means of deliverance from Hell and entrance into Paradise, for even if the slave is punished for some sins, he will not remain in Hell forever, and that is due to his having faith in the Oneness of Allah.

3) It is a means for being forgiven for sins and atonement for evil acts, as well a means for obtaining the intercession of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) on the Day of Judgment.

4) It is one of the greatest ways to drive away the anxieties and obstacles of this world and the Hereafter.

5) The acceptance, completeness, and reward for all actions and statements outwardly and inwardly depend on faith in the Oneness of Allah. Thus, the stronger one's faith in the Oneness of Allah and the more sincere one is towards Him, then the more these aforementioned matters will be complete and excellent.

6) It frees the slave from subjugation, attachment, fear, hope, and acting for the sake of created beings, and this is true honour and the highest rank. In addition to that, it is true devotion to Allah to not have hope in, fear, or entrust one's affairs to anyone except Him, and through that the success and salvation of a slave are completed and obtained.

7) Allah has guaranteed for those who have faith in the Oneness of Allah conquest and support in worldly matters, honour, nobility, facilitation of prosperity, improvement of conditions, and guidance in words and actions.

Fifth: The Meaning of the Declaration of the Oneness of Allah

The declaration of the Oneness of Allah is **"*La ilaha illa-Llah*" or,** 'There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah'.

The Meaning of the Declaration*:* There is no one worthy of worship except Allah. It is a negation of the divinity of anything other than Allah and the affirmation that all divinity is for Him alone, without any partner.

The Meaning of 'God'*:* It is anything that is worshipped. Thus whoever worships something, then he has taken it as a god beside Allah and that is invalid unless it is for a single God, Allah, as He states in the Quran:

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ هُوَ ٱلۡبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡعَلِيُّ ٱلۡكَبِيرُ ٦٢ ﴾

"That is because Allah He is the Truth (the only true God of All that exists, who has no partners or rivals with him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides him, it is falsehood and Verily, Allah He is the Most High, the Most Great." [22:62]

The Meaning of Worship: It is everything that Allah loves and is satisfied with of actions and words, outwardly and inwardly, such as calling upon Him, fear, reliance upon Him, prayer, mention of Him, as well as other actions. Thus, it is obligatory that all of that be for Allah alone, without partner, and whoever does anything of the above for something other than Allah, then they have made a partner for Him, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَمَن يَدۡعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ لَا بُرۡهَٰنَ لَهُۥ بِهِۦ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفۡلِحُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ١١٧ ﴾

"And whoever invokes (or worships), besides Allah, any other Ilâh (God), of whom He has no proof, then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely the disbelievers will not be successful." [23:117]

Sixth: Conditions of the Declaration of the Oneness of Allah

Testifying to the declaration of the Oneness of Allah does not benefit a person unless it meets seven conditions, and they are:

Firstly: To know its meaning and what is intended to be negated and affirmed from it, as stated in the Quran:

﴿ فَٱعۡلَمۡ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ﴾

"So know (O Mohammed) that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah," [47:19]

Secondly: To have certainty, while negating any doubt, such that the one who says the declaration of the Oneness of Allah is certain in whatever it indicates. For if he is doubtful and uncertain about what it indicates, the declaration will not benefit him, due to what Allah has said:

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ لَمۡ يَرۡتَابُواْ﴾

"Only those are the believers who have believed In Allah and his Messenger, and afterward doubt not." [49:15]

Thirdly: To have sincerity, while negating the assignment of any partners to Allah, such that one does not seek anything of this world in exchange for making the declaration of the Oneness of Allah, as He has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓاْ إِلَّا لِيَعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مُخۡلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ حُنَفَآءَ﴾

"And they were commanded not, but that they should Worship Allah, and Worship none but Him alone." [98:5]

Fourthly: To be honest, while negating any dishonesty, such that one makes this declaration of Oneness truthfully from his heart. As the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has stated:

If anyone testifies sincerely from His heart that there is no god but Allah, and that Mohammed is His messenger, Allah would prohibit the fire of Hell from him.

Fifthly: To have love for this declaration, its objectives and those who put it into practice, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادٗا يُحِبُّونَهُمۡ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

"And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah but those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else). " [2:165]

And also due to the statement of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him):

There are three qualities that whoever possesses them will obtain the sweetness of faith: He to whom Allah and His Messenger are dearer than all else; he who loves a man for Allah's sake alone; and he who detests returning to disbelief as much as he detests being cast into the fire.

Sixthly: To submit to what this declaration indicates, as stated by Allah in the Quran:

﴿ وَأَنِيبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمۡ وَأَسۡلِمُواْ لَهُۥ ﴾

"And turn in repentance and in obedience with true faith (Islamic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to him, (in Islam)" [39:54]

Seventh: to accept the dictates of this declaration with regards to worshipping Allah alone and avoiding the worship of anything beside Him. Thus whoever says the declaration and does not accept that worship is for Allah alone, then he is like those that Allah spoke of in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُوٓاْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمۡ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ يَسۡتَكۡبِرُونَ ٣٥ وَيَقُولُونَ أَئِنَّا لَتَارِكُوٓاْ ءَالِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٖ مَّجۡنُونِۭ ٣٦ ﴾

"Truly, when it was said to them: Lâ ilâha ill-Allah "(none has the right to be worshipped but Allah)," they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e. denied it) and (they) said: "Are we going to abandon our gods for the sake of a mad poet?" [37:35-36]

Seventh: That Which Nullifies Faith in the Oneness of Allah

Polytheism or ascribing partners to Allah the Exalted nullifies faith in the Oneness of Allah and since the most important and greatest obligation in Islam is to have faith in the Oneness of Allah and to single Him out for worship alone, then clearly the worst sin possible is to ascribe partners to Him. It is the only sin that Allah the Most Merciful never forgives, as stated in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغۡفِرُ أَن يُشۡرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ﴾

"Verily! Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners in worship with Him, but He forgives whom He pleases sins other than that, and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far away." [4:116]

And when the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) was asked which sin is the worst in the sight of Allah, he replied:

"To ascribe partners to Allah while He created you."

Polytheism corrupts and invalidates acts of obedience, thus an act of obedience is not accepted and the slave is not rewarded when accompanied by the occurrence of polytheism, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ٨٨﴾

"If they had joined In Worship others with Allah, All that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them." [6:88]

Polytheism requires that its perpetrator be doomed to Hell forever if he dies as a polytheist, as Allah the Most High has stated in the Quran:

﴿إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ﴾

"Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode." [5:72]

Eighth: The Categories of Polytheism

Polytheism is divided into two categories:

First: Major Polytheism which is in opposition to the very foundation of faith in the Oneness of Allah and expels a person from the religion of Islam.

Second: Minor Polytheism which is in opposition to having complete faith in the Oneness of Allah, however it does not expel a person from the religion of Islam.

The First Category: Major Polytheism

It is to divert any form of worship to anyone beside Allah such as calling upon someone other than Allah- for something that only Allah is able to do- entrusting one's affairs to[1] someone other than Him, or prostrating to anything as a form of worship. Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿وَلَا تَدْعُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ فَإِن فَعَلْتَ فَإِنَّكَ إِذًا مِّنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ١٠٦﴾

"And invoke not besides Allah, any that will neither profit you, nor hurt you, but if (in case) you did so, you shall certainly be one of the wrong-doers" [10:106]

(1) To entrust one's affairs to someone beside Allah is not to make use of a person or the help of some people as a means, as long as they are able to help.

'Wrong-doers' here means 'polytheists'. And Allah said:

﴿وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوٓاْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ٢٣﴾

"And put your trust in Allah if you are believers indeed." [5:23]

And Allah said:

﴿فَٱسۡجُدُواْۤ لِلَّهِۤ وَٱعۡبُدُواْ ۩ ٦٢﴾

"So fall you down in prostration to Allah, and Worship Him (Alone)" [53:62]

Since calling upon, entrusting one's affairs, and prostrating are acts of worship that Allah has commanded, whoever diverts them to Allah is someone who has faith in the Oneness of Allah, and whoever diverts them to anything besides Allah is a polytheist.

Moreover assigning partners to Allah by obeying them in what they make permissible and prohibited falls under this category of polytheism, as Allah informs us in the Quran:

﴿ٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ أَحۡبَارَهُمۡ وَرُهۡبَٰنَهُمۡ أَرۡبَابٗا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلۡمَسِيحَ ٱبۡنَ مَرۡيَمَ وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓاْ إِلَّا لِيَعۡبُدُوٓاْ إِلَٰهٗا وَٰحِدٗاۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَۚ سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥ عَمَّا يُشۡرِكُونَ ٣١﴾

"They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah and (They also took as their Lord) Messiah, son of Mary, while they (Jews and Christians) were commanded in the Torah and the Gospel) to worship none but one Ilâh (God - Allah) Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the Right to be worshipped but He) Praise and Glory be to him, (Far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)."[9:31]

This verse was revealed in regards to the Jews and Christians who obey their rabbis and priests regarding their making permissible what Allah forbids and their prohibiting what Allah permits. On the authority of `Adi ibn Hatim (may Allah be pleased with him):

I came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) wearing a golden cross around my neck. He said:

"`Adi! Throw away this idol," and I heard him recite the verse:

﴿ٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ أَحۡبَارَهُمۡ وَرُهۡبَٰنَهُمۡ أَرۡبَابٗا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ﴾

"They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah".

He said: **"Verily they were not worshipping them, however when their monks and rabbis made something lawful for them, they deemed it permissible; and when their monks and rabbis made something unlawful, they deemed it as forbidden."**[1]

The Second Category: Minor Polytheism

It is anything that leads to the major polytheism and it is divided into two parts:

Apparent Polytheism

Hidden Polytheism

1) Apparent Polytheism can be committed with words or actions. It is committed with words by doing things like swearing oaths by other than Allah, such as swearing by the Prophet Mohammed or Jesus (peace be upon them), and by saying 'Things will happen according to whatever Allah and you will'. For indeed the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

"Whoever swears by other than Allah then he has fallen into disbelief or polytheism."[2]

And the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied to the one who said: "Whatever Allah wills and you will":

"Have you made me equal to Allah? Rather say, what Allah wills alone."[3]

Apparent polytheism is committed through actions such as wearing amulets and threads used as charms to ward off misfortune, and believing that they are a reason for that happening.

2) Hidden Polytheism

It is the polytheism that is related to intentions and wishes such as doing something to show off and for the sake of reputation, such that the act is not done for the sake of Allah the Exalted, rather it is done seeking praise or compliments from people. For example, a person might pray or fast so that people will say how upright or excellent his religious commitment is. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The thing that I fear most for you is Minor Polytheism." They said: "O Messenger of Allah, what is Minor Polytheism?" He said: "Showing off. Allah will say to them on the Day of Judgment when people are being rewarded for their deeds: 'Go to those for whom you were showing off in the worldly life, and see if you find a reward with them."[4]

(1) Transmitted by at-Tirmidhī,.
(2) Transmitted by at-Tirmidhī,.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(4) Transmitted by Ahmad.

Ninth: Defining Major Sins and Distinguishing Them from Minor Sins

Sins and disobedience which Muslims fall into are divided into major and minor ones, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ إِن تَجۡتَنِبُواْ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنۡهَوۡنَ عَنۡهُ نُكَفِّرۡ عَنكُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ وَنُدۡخِلۡكُم مُّدۡخَلٗا كَرِيمٗا ٣١ ﴾

"If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, we shall remit from You your (small) sins, and admit you to a noble entrance (i.e. Paradise)." [4:31]

The Major Sins

They are all sins that carry with them a Islamic punishment in this world, or a specific threat in the Hereafter. What is intended by 'Islamic punishment in this world' is an ordained punishment, like the punishment of death for the one who commits murder, amputation for the one who commits theft, and flogging for the one who commits fornication. What is intended by 'a specific threat in the Hereafter' is the threat of being in the Fire, being cursed, incurring the anger of Allah, being prohibited from entering Paradise or smelling its fragrance, being prohibited from having faith and not being counted as among the Muslims, and things similar to that.

The Minor Sins

They are sins that do not have any Islamic punishment in this world nor is there a specific threat regarding them in the Hereafter.

Tenth: The Ruling on Committing Major Sins

The one who commits a major sin- other than polytheism and disbelief- is not expelled from Islam for his sin, rather, in this world he is regarded as a believer deficient in faith- or a believer with respect to his faith and a criminal with regards to his major sin- and in the Hereafter he will be subject to the will of Allah the Most High. If Allah wills, He will forgive him, or if Allah wills, He will punish him. If the sinner is punished he will not remain in Hell forever, rather he will be taken out of it on account of whatever faith he has, even if it is an atom's worth, as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever says, 'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' and has faith in his heart the weight of a grain of barley will be taken out of the Fire. Whoever says, 'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' and has faith in his heart the weight of a grain of wheat will be taken out of the Fire. And whoever says, 'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' and has faith in his heart the weight of an atom will be taken out of the fire."[1]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

The Second Pillar
Belief in the Angels

From the pillars of belief that all Muslims are required to have is the belief in the venerable angels without which a Muslim's belief is incorrect as stated by Allah the Exalted:

﴿ لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ﴾

"It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allah, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allah, the Last day, the angels, the Book, the Prophets." [2:177]

In this chapter we will discuss the obligation of believing in the angels and will also identify and describe their outer appearance and inner character, their numbers, names, duties, their interaction with humankind and the benefits of holding belief in their existence.

Firstly: Identifying the Angels

The angels are a creation of Allah that were created from light and were given the ability to change into different forms. Allah the Exalted brought them into existence in order to worship Him and carry out His commandments throughout the universe. They always implement what they are commanded and never disobey Him.

They remain in the unseen world and humans are unable to see them, but we are required to believe in them without the slightest doubt because Allah and His Apostle (peace be upon him) have informed us about them.

Secondly: The obligation of believing in the Angels

It is obligatory upon all Muslims to have firm belief that Allah created the angels and that they never disobey His command or leave His worship. They are incalculable and only Allah the All-Knowing is aware of their exact number. Some of them have been identified by their names and tasks, others have not been given names, irrespective of this, a Muslim is to believe in all of them. Allah the Exalted has stated:

﴿ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ﴾

"The Messenger (Mohammed) believes in what has been sent down to Him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believes In Allah, his Angels, his Books, and his Messengers." [2:285]

To believe in them is to fulfill the second of the six pillars of faith as stated by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when he answered the questions posed to him by the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him). He answered.

"Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His postles, the Last Day and Predestination."

Having belief in the angels entails three things:

1) To affirm their existence

2) To believe in their qualities, numbers, names and responsibilities.

3) To give them their proper status recognizing that they are slaves of Allah the Exalted, who commands them as He wishes and they cannot do anything from their own power, but only through the power that Allah has invested in them. They like all creation will die and the have no claim to any form of divinity or worship as Allah has stated in the Quran.

﴿بَلۡ عِبَادٞ مُّكۡرَمُونَ ٢٦﴾

"They are but honoured slaves." [21:26]

Thirdly: The qualities of Angels

Firstly: The nature of their creation

1) They are created from light.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has stated:

"The angels have been created from light."[1]

Due to the angels having been created from light, humans are unable to visualize them as Allah has not given the human eye the scope to do so.

(1) Transmitted by Muslim

2) They are a colossal creation.

Allah has made the angels distinguished from Jinn and humankind by their sheer size and power as Allah has stated in the Quran.

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡ وَأَهۡلِيكُمۡ نَارٗا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلۡحِجَارَةُ عَلَيۡهَا مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٞ شِدَادٞ لَّا
يَعۡصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمۡ وَيَفۡعَلُونَ مَا يُؤۡمَرُونَ ٦ ﴾

"O You who believe! ward off from yourselves and your families a Hell whose fuel is men and stones, over which are angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded."[66:6]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) described the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) in the following way when he saw him. I saw Gabriel descending from heaven and his colossal size filled the space between heaven and earth.

3) The beauty of the angels

Allah the Exalted created the angels in a beautiful form as he stated about the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him)

﴿ ذُو مِرَّةٖ فَٱسۡتَوَىٰ ٦ ﴾

"Free from any defect in body and mind then He (Gabriel) rose and became stable."[53:6]

Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) stated that it meant, "He has a beautiful appearance."

4) Their ability to change form.

Allah Glorified and Exalted be He gave the angels the ability to change forms to that of human beings as the Angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary as Allah has stated in the Quran

﴿ فَأَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرٗا سَوِيّٗا ١٧ ﴾

"Then we sent to her Our Ruh [angel Jibrael (Gabriel)], and He appeared before her In the form of a man In All respects." [19:17]

5) They have wings

These wings vary in number and in their size as Allah has stated in the Quran.

﴿ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ جَاعِلِ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُوْلِيٓ أَجۡنِحَةٖ مَّثۡنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَۚ يَزِيدُ فِي ٱلۡخَلۡقِ مَا
يَشَآءُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ١﴾

"All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the (only) Originator of the heavens and the earth, who made the angels Messengers with wings, - two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Verily, Allah is able to do all things." [35:1]

And on the authority of Abdullah ibn Masood who said:

"The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) saw the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) and he had 600 wings."[1]

6) They are not described as being of a male or female gender.

The Arab polytheists were misguided in this as they claimed that the angels were of a female gender so Allah the Exalted responded to their claims and stated:

﴿وَجَعَلُواْ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ عِبَٰدُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ إِنَٰثًاۚ أَشَهِدُواْ خَلۡقَهُمۡۚ سَتُكۡتَبُ شَهَٰدَتُهُمۡ وَيُسۡـَٔلُونَ ١٩﴾

"And they make the angels who themselves are slaves to the Most Beneficent (Allah) females. Did they witness their creation? Their evidence will be recorded, and they will be questioned!" [43:19]

7) They do not eat, drink, marry or produce offspring.

Allah has informed us in the Quran that some angels visited the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) in human form and he offered them food, but they did not extend their hands to consume the food so he became afraid and they informed him of their real identity.

﴿فَلَمَّا رَءَآ أَيۡدِيَهُمۡ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيۡهِ نَكِرَهُمۡ وَأَوۡجَسَ مِنۡهُمۡ خِيفَةٗۚ قَالُواْ لَا تَخَفۡ إِنَّآ أُرۡسِلۡنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِ لُوطٖ ٧٠﴾

"When he saw their hands went not towards it (the meal), He felt some mistrust of them, and conceived a fear of them. They said: "Fear not, we have been sent against the people of Lot". [11:70]

Scholarly consensus also holds that they never marry or produce offspring.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

8) They never become tired or bored.

Allah has informed us that the angels constantly worship and obey His commands without ever becoming bored or tired like human beings as stated in the following verse:

﴿ يُسَبِّحُونَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

"They glorify his praises night and day (and) they never slacken (to do so)." [21:20]

Meaning that they never become tired. As He has also said:

﴿ فَٱلَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُۥ بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔمُونَ ﴾

"Then there are those who are with Your Lord (angels) glorify Him night and day, and never are they tired. " [41:38]

Meaning they do not become bored

9) They die

It is from the wisdom of Allah and His unique right to divinity and power that all His creation including angels must one day perish as Allah states in the Quran:

﴿ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ ﴾

Everything will perish save his Face. [28:88]

And when all creation perishes Allah the Exalted will call out:

﴿ لِّمَنِ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

"The day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. Whose is the kingdom this day?"

Allah himself will reply to his Question: ***It is Allah's the one, the Irresistibl! "[40:16]***

Secondly: The Nature of their Character

1) They are sinless, as Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿ لَّا يَعْصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

"Who disobey not, (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded." [66:6]

2) They are afraid of Allah and are always conscious of him. Allah has said:

﴿ وَيُسَبِّحُ ٱلرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِۦ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِۦ ﴾

"And the thunder glorifies and praises him, and so do the angels because of his awe." [13:13]

And He has also said:

﴿ وَهُم مِّنْ خَشْيَتِهِۦ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

"And they stand in awe for fear of Him." [21:28]

3) They never become slack in their remembrance of Allah the Exalted and remain engaged in glorifying Him.

﴿ يُسَبِّحُونَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

They glorify his praises night and day (and) they never slacken (to do so)."[21:20]

4) They are honourable and dutiful as Allah the Exalted has stated in the Quran

﴿ بِأَيْدِى سَفَرَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ كِرَامٍۭ بَرَرَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

"In the hands of scribes (angels) honourable and obedient." [80:15-16]

This means that they serve as ambassadors of Allah and He has created them gracious and honourable and their character and actions are pure and virtuous.

5) They are organized in everything they do as we find in the way that they stand in front of Allah the Exalted in the Hereafter:

﴿ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلرُّوحُ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا ۖ لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾

"The Day that Gabriel and the angels will stand forth in rows, none shall speak except Him whom the Most Beneficent (Allah) allows, and He will speak what is right." [78:38]

Moreover, on the authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrates that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

Why do you not line yourselves up in rows as the angels do in the presence of their Lord? We said: O' Apostle of Allah, how do the angels line themselves up in rows in the presence of their Lord? He answered: They make the first row complete and keep close together in the row.(1)

6) The angels are bashful as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said when he spoke about His companion Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him).

"Should I not be bashful from the person from whom the angels are bashful?"

Fourthly: Their number

The number of angels is incalculable and only Allah their creator is fully aware of their exact number as He has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ﴾

"And none can know the soldiers of Your Lord but He." [74:31]

We also find in the Prophetic tradition that the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) told the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) during his miraculous ascension:

"This is the 'Much Frequented House' every day seventy thousand angels visit it and then depart never returning to it then another group of angels come."(2)

Fifthly: The Names of the Angels

The angels have given names, but we only know the names of a few which have come to us through the Holy Quran or authentic prophetic traditions. The following are some of them:

1) Jibreel (Gabriel) and 2) Mika'eel (Michael)

﴿قُلْ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُۥ نَزَّلَهُۥ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَىٰلَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

"Say: "Whoever is an enemy to Jibreel (Gabriel) (let Him die In his fury), for indeed He has brought it (this Qur'ân) down to Your heart by Allah's Permission, confirming what came before it [i.e. the (Torah) and the (Gospel)] and guidance and glad tidings for the believers. Whoever is an enemy to Allah, his angels, his Messengers, Jibreel (Gabriel) and Mika'eel (Michael), then verily, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers." [2:97-98]

3) Israfeel

He is the angel that will blow the trumpet

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) would mention the names of the Angel Jibreel, Mika'eel and Israfeel when he would start the optional night prayer as we find on the authority of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said:

"When he woke up to pray at night, he would start his prayer by saying: O Allah, Lord of Jibreel, Mika'eel and Israfeel Creator of Heaven and Earth, Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, You are the Judge of the matters in which your slaves differ; guide me with regard to what they differ in of truth by your permission, for you guide whomever you will to the straight path."(1)

4) Malik

He is the Warden of Hell as Allah has stated when talking about the people of the fire:

﴿وَنَادَوْاْ يَـٰمَـٰلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ﴾

"And they will cry: "O Malik! Let your Lord put an end to us." [43:77]

5) Munkar and 6) Nakeer

It is proven from the authentic Prophetic traditions that the two angels who question the dead in their graves are called "Munkar and Nakeer"

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

7) Hârût and 8) Mârût

They are two angels that Allah has mentioned in the Quran in the following verse:

﴿وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَـٰنُ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ ٱلسِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى
ٱلْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَـٰرُوتَ وَمَـٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ﴾

"And Solomon did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Hârût and Mârût, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us). [2:102]

In addition, it appears from the context of the above verses that Allah sent them down as a trial for humankind in a time gone by. There are many legends that have come in regards to them that are not to be found in the Quran or authentic traditions, but they are all false.

Sixthly: Their duties

We find in the Book of Allah and the Prophetic traditions that the angels have been given many great responsibilities in the heavens and the earth and no one, but Allah is aware of all the duties that they have. Some of them are:

1) The angels who carry the Throne of Allah.

The Throne of Allah Glorified and Exalted be He is the greatest and highest of creation and it is like the roof of the world surrounded by the heavens and above them and no one but Allah knows its real dimension. It is held up by eight angels as Allah has stated in the Quran.

﴿وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَـٰنِيَةٌ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

"And the angels will be on its sides, and eight angels will, that day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them." [69:17]

2) The angels who convey the revelation

It is the revelation that Allah sent down with His apostles (peace be upon them) including the Sacred Laws and Holy Scriptures and the appointed angel for this is Jibreel (peace be upon him) as Allah has stated in the Holy Quran.

﴿ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ ﴾

"Which the trustworthy Rûh (Gabriel)] has brought down; upon your heart (O Mohammed) that you may be (one) of the warners." [26:193]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"When Allah wishes to speak via revelation, the people of heaven hear from heaven a clanging like a chain dragged across a rock and they swoon, then they remain like that until Jibreel (peace be upon him) comes to them. When he comes to them, they recover and say: O Jibreel, what did your Lord say? He says: "The truth" and they say: 'The truth, the truth'."(1)

3) The angels who are the custodians of Paradise as Allah has stated:

﴿ وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَـٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَٱدْخُلُوهَا خَـٰلِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ ﴾

"And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, its gates will be opened and its keepers will say: Peace be upon you. You have done well, so enter here, to abide therein." [39:73]

4) The angels who are the wardens of Hell as Allah the Exalted has stated

﴿ وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَآ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَـٰتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَـٰذَا ۚ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ وَلَـٰكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ عَلَى ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾

And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups, till, when they reach it, the gates thereof will be opened (suddenly like a prison at the arrival of the prisoners) and its keepers will say, "Did not the Messengers come to you from yourselves, reciting to you the verses of your Lord, and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours?" they will say: "Yes, but the word of torment has been justified against the disbelievers!" [39:71]

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(1) Transmitted by Abu Dāwud

5) The angels who are responsible for the rain, wind and clouds. This is done by Mika'eel and his helpers from among the angels at the command of Allah. As is stated in the Quran:

﴿فَٱلزَّٰجِرَٰتِ زَجۡرٗا ٢﴾

"By those (angels) who drive the clouds In a good way."[37:2]

6) The angel who is responsible for blowing the trumpet who is Israfeel and Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَنُفِخَ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخۡرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمۡ قِيَامٞ يَنظُرُونَ ٦٨﴾

"And the trumpet will be blown, and All who are In the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allah will. Then it will blown a second time and behold, they will be standing, looking on (waiting)."[39:68]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"How can I relax when the bearer of the trumpet has put it to his lips and tilted his forehead, listening and waiting for the command to blow it?"[(1)]

7) The angel responsible for the Mountains

It is established in the authentic traditions on the authority of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that when the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) travelled to invite the people of Ta'if to Islam they refused and set upon him the worst of them. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"I lifted my head towards the sky to see a cloud shading me. I looked up and saw Gabriel in it. He called me saying, "Allah has heard your people's saying to you and how they have replied. Allah has sent the Angel of the Mountains to you that you may order him to do whatever you wish to these people." The Angel of the Mountains greeted me, and said, "O Muhammad, order what you wish. If you like, I will cause the mountains on either side to fall on them." The Prophet said, "No, I hope that Allah will bring from their descendants people who will worship Allah alone without associating partners with Him."[(2)]

Seventhly: The relationship between the angels and humankind

The relation between these two creations of Allah is confirmed in many authentic sources. There are angels that look after the foetus while it is in the womb of the mother and others that protect them during their lifetime. There are also angels that record the actions of humankind and direct them to good and others that extract their souls from their bodies at the time of death.

(1) Transmitted by at-Tirmidhī.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

1) The angels who are responsible for the foetus in the womb.

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said;

"Allah has appointed an angel in the womb, and the angel says, 'O Lord! A drop of discharge (i.e. of semen), O Lord! a clot, O Lord! a piece of flesh.' And then, if Allah wishes to complete the child's creation, the angel will say. 'O Lord! A male or a female? O Lord! Wretched or blessed (in religion)? What will his livelihood be? What will his age be?' The angel writes all this while the child is in the womb of its mother."[(1)]

2) The angels responsible for looking after humankind

Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ لَهُۥ مُعَقِّبَٰتٌ مِّنۢ بَيۡنِ يَدَيۡهِ وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِۦ يَحۡفَظُونَهُۥ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

"For each (person), there are angels in succession, before and behind Him. They Guard Him by the command of Allah. " [13:11]

The famous exegete of the Quran Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) when explaining the meaning of 'angels in succession" said that they are the angels that Allah has tasked with protecting humankind from in front and behind them and when the command of Allah that is intended for them occurs they leave depart the company of humankind.

3) The angels responsible for recording actions.

They record all good and bad actions that are committed by humans as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَإِنَّ عَلَيۡكُمۡ لَحَٰفِظِينَ ١٠ كِرَامٗا كَٰتِبِينَ ١١ يَعۡلَمُونَ مَا تَفۡعَلُونَ ١٢ ﴾

"But Verily, over you (are appointed angels in charge of mankind) to watch you, Kirâman (honourable) Kâtibîn writing down (your deeds) they know all that you do." [82:10-12]

Allah has deputised with every human two angels that are always present they record every action, and statement of the person as Allah has stated in the Quran

﴿ إِذۡ يَتَلَقَّى ٱلۡمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ ٱلۡيَمِينِ وَعَنِ ٱلشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٞ ١٧ مَّا يَلۡفِظُ مِن قَوۡلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيۡهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٞ ١٨ ﴾

"(Remember) that the two receivers (recording angels) receive one sitting on the right

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim

and one on the left (to note his or her actions) not a word do they utter, but there is a watcher by them ready (to record it)." [50:17-18]

The recording of human actions by angels is certain, it is preserved, and then it will be brought on the Day of Judgment were it will be displayed as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ وَكُلَّ إِنسَٰنٍ أَلْزَمْنَٰهُ طَٰٓئِرَهُۥ فِى عُنُقِهِۦ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ كِتَٰبًا يَلْقَىٰهُ مَنشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ
كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

"And we have fastened every man's deeds to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection, we shall bring out for Him a Book which He will find wide open. (It will be said to him): "Read your book. You yourself are Sufficient as a reckoner against you this day." [17:13-14]

4) The angels responsible for providing a good inspiration to the human conscious.

Allah has deputised with every human a companion from the angels who encourages him to commit good deeds and a companion from the Jinn who encourages him to commit bad deeds and make them appear attractive to him as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"There is none among you but he has with him a constant companion from among the jinn and another constant companion from the angels that has been assigned to him." His companions asked, "Even you, O Messenger of Allah?' He said, "Even me, but Allah helped me with him and he became Muslim (or and I am safe from him), so he only enjoins me to do that which is good."(1)

5) The angels responsible for extracting the human souls.

The angel is known as the Angel of Death, it is his responsibility to extract the souls of humans, and then to give them to the angels who will carry the soul to the sky at the command of Allah the Exalted. Allah has said:

﴿ قُلْ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم مَّلَكُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ٱلَّذِى وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

"Say: "The angel of death, who is set over you, will take your souls, and then you shall be brought to your Lord."[32:11]

The extraction of souls for the unbelievers and wrongdoers is extremely unforgiving, violent and painful, but for the believers it is done compassionately.

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(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

Eighthly: The benefits of believing in the angels

Believing in the angels has many benefits some of which are:

1) Recognising the supreme greatness of their Creator, His power and sovereignty.

2) Gratefulness to Allah for His deputising the angels to protect humans and record their deeds as well as other duties.

3) Adoration and respect towards the angels for their unflinching worship of Allah in the best of ways as well as their seeking forgiveness from Allah for humankind.

The Third Pillar
Belief in the Messengers

The wisdom and mercy of Allah the Exalted demanded that He send to each people a messenger to clarify for them His laws and method and to take them by the hand towards His straight path. At the same time they were to give those who obediently tread the path glad tidings of delight and abundant reward; and to warn the disobedient ones who diverged from this path of an agonizing punishment, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗاۚ وَإِن مِّنۡ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٞ ٢٤ ﴾

"And there has not been a people except there has passed through them a warner."**[35:24]**

That is because Allah the Exalted is All-Wise and Just, and from among the dictates of His justice is that He does not punish anyone from His creation except after establishing proof against them, making clear to them the path, explaining to them guidance and the right way, making the truth known from falsehood, and misguidance from guidance, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبۡعَثَ رَسُولٗا ١٥ ﴾

"And We are not those who punish until we have dispatched a messenger."[17:15]

And this, all of it, does not materialize except through the sending of messengers who are ambassadors between Allah and His creation and who are announcers from Allah about His guidance and laws. Therefore belief in the messengers is a great obligation and foundational pillar from among the pillars of belief in Allah the Exalted and the belief of the slave is not sound without it.

In this chapter, we will attempt to cast light upon this great pillar which is the fourth pillar of belief in Allah the Exalted; so we begin and success lies in Allah:

Firstly: The Meaning of Belief in the Messengers

Belief in the messengers entails the required affirmation that they are all sent from Allah that Allah the Exalted has sent to each people a messenger from among

them, calling them to worship Allah alone and to abandon worship of anything other than Him as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ ﴾

***"And We sent to each people a messenger [saying]: 'Worship Allah and abstain from false deities'."*[16:36]**

That all of these prophets and messengers are truthful, rightly guided, noble, pious and loyal; that they conveyed all of what Allah sent them with, they did not conceal, alter, add or decrease from it a single letter on their own accord; and that all of them were upon clear truth.

Secondly: The Ruling on Belief in the Messengers

Belief in the prophets of Allah and His messengers is an obligation from among the obligations of this religion, and a great pillar from the pillars of Faith. The faith of the slave is not sound without it as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ﴾

***"He believes in the messenger and in what was sent down to him from his Lord; and the Believers, all believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers."*[2:285]**

So Allah the Exalted has made belief in the messengers among the pillars of Faith; it is among what the messenger (peace be upon him) and believers believed in, He made it clear that the believers do not differentiate between the messengers, such that they believe in some and not in others, rather they believe in all of them.

Allah the Exalted has also made clear in His Book the disbelief of the one who does not believe in His prophets and messengers, or the one who differentiates between them, believing in some and disbelieving in others, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا ﴾

"Indeed those who disbelieve in Allah, His messengers, who wish to differentiate between Allah and His messengers, they say: 'We believe in some and we disbelieve in others', and they wish to adopt a path between that. Those, they are the true disbelievers."[4:150-151]

Then after that Allah said in clarification of the case of the people of Faith:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَلَمۡ يُفَرِّقُواْ بَيۡنَ أَحَدٖ مِّنۡهُمۡ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ سَوۡفَ يُؤۡتِيهِمۡ أُجُورَهُمۡۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٗا رَّحِيمٗا ١٥٢﴾

"And those who believe in Allah and His messengers, and who have not differentiated between any of them, those, their reward shall be given to them; and Allah is forgiving, merciful."[4:152]

Thirdly: The Number of Prophets and Messengers

There are a large number of prophets and messengers of Allah; among them are those who Allah informed us of in His Book, such as: Adam, Nuh, Idris, Hud, Salih, Ibrahim, Isma'il, Ishaq, Yaqub, Yusuf, Lut, Shuayb, Yunus, Musa, Harun, Ilyas, Zakariya, Yahya, Alyasa, Dhul-Kifl, Dawud, Sulayman, Ayyub, al-Asbat (the children of Yaqub (peace be upon him), Isa, and Mohammed, and he was the last of them (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all). And among them are those about whom no information was mentioned to us, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَرُسُلٗا قَدۡ قَصَصۡنَٰهُمۡ عَلَيۡكَ مِن قَبۡلُ وَرُسُلٗا لَّمۡ نَقۡصُصۡهُمۡ عَلَيۡكَ﴾

"And there are messengers that came before whose accounts We have related to you, and messengers whose accounts We have not related to you."[4:164]

Fourthly: The Prophets and Messengers of Allah were Human

These prophets and messengers, all of them, were human; they did not have any attributes of Lordship or Divinity. Nothing of worship was diverted to them, rather they did not have any power to benefit or harm even themselves, as Allah the Exalted said about Prophet Nuh (peace be upon him):

﴿وَلَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمۡ عِندِي خَزَآئِنُ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَعۡلَمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبَ وَلَآ أَقُولُ إِنِّي مَلَكٞ﴾

"And I do not say to you that I have the treasures of Allah; I do not know the Unseen and I do not say that I am an angel."[11:31]

Allah the Exalted commanded His Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) to say:

﴿لَّآ أَمۡلِكُ لِنَفۡسِي نَفۡعٗا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۚ﴾

"I do not have control over any benefit or harm for myself except what Allah wills."[7:188]

They are only noble slaves whom Allah the Exalted conferred messengership upon, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿قَالَتۡ لَهُمۡ رُسُلُهُمۡ إِن نَّحۡنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُكُمۡ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦۖ﴾

"Their messengers said to them: 'Indeed we are but humans, like you, however Allah blesses whoever He wills from among His slaves."[14:11]

Why were the messengers human?

Truly great was the opposition of the enemies of the messengers against the sending of the messengers from among human beings, and this matter was among the greatest that deterred people from believing in Allah the Exalted as Allah said:

﴿وَمَا مَنَعَ ٱلنَّاسَ أَن يُؤۡمِنُوٓاْ إِذۡ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلۡهُدَىٰٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓاْ أَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ بَشَرٗا رَّسُولٗا ٩٤﴾

"And nothing prevented the people from believing when guidance came to them except that they said: 'Has Allah sent humans as messengers?" **[17:94]**

So they considered following the messengers as an unseemly affair on account that they were human beings, and an evident loss, as Allah the Exalted informed us of their view:

﴿وَلَئِنۡ أَطَعۡتُم بَشَرٗا مِّثۡلَكُمۡ إِنَّكُمۡ إِذٗا لَّخَٰسِرُونَ ٣٤﴾

"And indeed if you obey human beings like yourselves, you would then be losers."[23:34]

Upon reflecting and contemplating the wisdom of Allah the Exalted becomes clear regarding His making the messengers and prophets from among the human beings, and that it was for certain reasons, among them are:

1) Human beings are the most capable of leading and directing other humans, and they are well-suited to serve as examples and models and this wisdom becomes evident when reflecting on the messengerhood of any messenger among them.

2) The difficulty of seeing angels; is due to the differing natures of angels and human beings. There is severe hardship and pain in contact with angels and not all humans can bear it. Narrations have demonstrated that the messenger (peace be upon him) would suffer hardship from the revelation. When the revelation was sent down to him it would change his complexion, his sweat would pour, and his shoulders would tremble. Anyone around him would see that in him. So the sending of messengers from among human beings was necessary so that they would be able to address them, understand them, and mix with them. If Allah had sent angels indeed that would not have been possible.

3) The messenger did not come only to convey -in other words- he did not come in order to convey a single matter from Allah then he is done, rather he would reside amongst the people until a group of them were raised upon the truth. He was a working example for them, and they in turn were an example for people; so had the messenger been non-human, then this example would never have materialized since people would say at the time: ‘This is an angel and we are human beings- we have bodies, inclinations, and desires’ and as a consequence they would be among those who abstained from observing the commands of their Lord with the [presumed] proof that this commitment is not within the capability of human beings, that it does not deal with their situation, rather it deals with the situation of angels who do not live on this earth, and they do not feel the same things that the people of earth feel of wishes and desires. And at this time they would say: ‘How can Allah send us an angel and demand that we imitate him in our actions?! Could He not send us a human being like us- who senses as we sense, thinks as we think, and sympathizes with our needs and the limits of our ability?’ For that reason the wisdom of Allah the Exalted required that the messengers be human.

Fifthly: Comparing between Messengers

The messengers have levels of preference between them, for some of them are more preferred to Allah than others, just as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿تِلْكَ ٱلرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ﴾

“Those messengers, We preferred some over others.” [2:253]

The five most preferred among them are: Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa, and Mohammed (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all); and they are mentioned by Allah the Exalted:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِيثَـٰقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَـٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾﴾

"And when We took from the prophets their covenants, from you [Mohammed], Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, and Isa ibn Maryam We took from them a solemn covenant."[33:7]

The most preferred of these five are Mohammed and Ibrahim (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them both); and the most preferred of them is Mohammed (peace be upon him) as he said:

'I will be the leader of the children of Adam on the Day of Resurrection'.[1]

Sixthly: The religion of the Prophets is one while their laws differed

The religion of all the prophets was a single religion, and it is Islam which calls to the Oneness of Allah the Exalted to single Him out with worship, and to abandon the worship of others beside Him as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلَقَدۡ بَعَثۡنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٖ رَّسُولًا أَنِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱجۡتَنِبُواْ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَۖ فَمِنۡهُم مَّنۡ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ وَمِنۡهُم مَّنۡ حَقَّتۡ عَلَيۡهِ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُۚ ﴾

"Indeed We sent to every people a messenger [saying]: 'Worship Allah and abstain from false deities'. So among them were those who Allah guided and among them were those who were more deserving of misguidance."[16:36]

Allah also said:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدُونِ ٢٥ ﴾

"And We did not send a messenger before you except We revealed to him that there is none worthy of worship except Me, so worship Me."[21:25]

So all of the messengers came with the religion of Islam aside from which Allah does not accept from anyone, just as He the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمُۗ ﴾

"Indeed the religion according to Allah is Islam."[3:19]

Due to this, it is a mistake for some to say: 'The heavenly religions', because there is only a single religion and it is Islam which calls to the worship of Allah alone, and all the prophets and messengers were sent with it.

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

The only difference between the prophets and messengers is in the laws, meaning, in issues of what is permissible and forbidden, what is commanded and prohibited. So there can be something that is permissible in the laws of one prophet, however it is prohibited in the laws of another; likewise there can be something legislated in the laws of one prophet, however it is not legislated in the laws of another, so on and so forth. Thus Allah the Exalted legislates for each people what is compatible with their condition and time, and it is a guarantor of their rectification as well as for their best interests. As for creed, then it is a single creed according to all the prophets, and due to this the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

‘The prophets are paternal brothers their mothers [i.e. laws] are different, but their religion is one’(1)

The intended meaning is that the prophets are like brothers having the same father, meaning their religion is a single religion (the Oneness of Allah the Exalted), and their mothers differ, meaning their laws differ.

Seventhly: The Function of the Messengers and Their Mission

The messengers are ambassadors of Allah the Exalted towards His slaves, and bearers of His revelation; Allah the Exalted has selected and chosen them to perform particular functions whose mention comes in the Quran and Sunnah; and these functions are as follows:

1) To proclaim clearly

This function is the fundamental mission of the messengers because Allah the Exalted did not send them except to proclaim to people what has been sent down them from their Lord, and to clarify it for them in speech and actions just as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did with his Companions. There are thirteen verses in the Noble Quran documenting that the mission of the messenger is only to proclaim, as Allah the Exalted said in a command to His messenger (peace be upon him) :

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ بَلِّغۡ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن رَّبِّكَۖ وَإِن لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلۡ فَمَا بَلَّغۡتَ رِسَالَتَهُۥ﴾

“Oh messenger, proclaim what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you do not do so, then you will not have delivered His message.”[5:67]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2) To invite to Allah the Exalted

The mission of the messengers does not stop at the limit of clarifying the truth and communicating it, rather along with that they invite people to accept their invitation, to respond to it, and to realize it in themselves in the form of beliefs, statements, and actions, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ ﴾

"Indeed We sent to every people a messenger [saying]: 'Worship Allah and abstain from false deities'."[16:36]

And every messenger said to his people:

﴿ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴾

"So fear Allah and obey me."[3:50]

From careful consideration of the circumstances of the prophet with their respective people- as it is related in the Quran- one will realize the extent of the great effort which the messengers expended in the course of inviting people to Allah the Exalted. Let it suffice you regarding this to read the chapter of Nuh [in the Quran] in order to see the effort which Nuh (peace be upon him) expended throughout 950 years; he had invited them night and day, privately and publicly; he employed methods of arousing inspiration and fear, making promises and threats; he attempted to open their minds and he directed them to what is in the world of the signs of Allah, however they opposed and rejected [all of that], as Allah the Glorified said:

﴿ قَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ مَن لَّمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُۥ وَوَلَدُهُۥٓ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴾

"Nuh said: 'My Lord, indeed they disobey me and they follow he whose wealth and children does not enrich him except in loss."[71:21]

3) To give glad tidings and warn

This function is categorized with 'inviting to Allah the Exalted'. Thus the messengers invite people to Allah the Exalted and obedience to Him through acting upon His commands and abstaining from what He has prohibited; and at the same time they would give glad tidings to those who complied in obedience of a great achievement and a pure life in the world and in the Afterlife; and they warned those who disobeyed in opposition with misery in the world, and an agonizing punishment in the Afterlife, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَمَا نُرۡسِلُ ٱلۡمُرۡسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ﴾

"And We did not send messengers except as bringers of glad tidings and as warners."[6:48]

From the completeness of the mercy and justice of Allah is that He has made clear to people the types of pleasures and sorts of enjoyments that He has prepared for His believing slaves, just as He has made clear the categories of destructive punishment which He has prepared for the disbelieving criminals.

4) To rectify deviant thinking and spurious beliefs

Allah the Exalted has created His slaves upon a sound disposition- to worship Allah alone and to not associate partners with Him-, however demons come to them and make falsehood appear attractive to them. They provoke doubts and misguidance in them to the point that [the slaves] deviate and go astray from the straight path; and they divert them from this sound disposition which they were upon. Thus it is from the mercy and favour of Allah the Exalted that whenever that occurs, He sends His messengers in order to return them to the correct road and the straight path, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿كَانَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مُبَشِّـرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ﴾

"Mankind were one community and Allah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings."[2:213]

In other words, people used to be a single group established upon the Oneness, belief, and worship of Allah the Exalted alone, then they differed with one another, and then Allah the Exalted sent the prophets as givers of glad tidings and warners.

Along with each prophet inviting his people to the Oneness of Allah and the abandonment of worshipping anything other than Him each messenger was dedicated to rectifying the corruptions taking place in his era and region; that is because deviation from the straight path differs with respect to the circumstances of the time and place. So Nuh (peace be upon him) rebuked his people for worshipping idols which were common among them. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and Hud (peace be upon him) rebuked their people for seeking superiority and being tyrannical in the earth. Salih (peace be upon him) rebuked his people for their corruption in the earth and joining those who were corrupt. Lut (peace be upon him) fought the abnormal sexuality prevalent among his people. Shuayb (peace be upon him) resisted the crime of economic corruption in the form of skimming in measurements and weights, and so on and so forth.

5) To establish proof against the slaves

Allah the Exalted has sent messengers and revealed the Books so that there would not remain any proof or excuse for people on the Day of Resurrection, just as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ حُجَّةُۢ بَعۡدَ ٱلرُّسُلِ ﴾

"Messengers, givers of glad tidings and warners, so that there would not be a proof for people against Allah after the messengers."[4:165]

If Allah the Exalted had not sent messengers to people surely they would come on the Day of Resurrection accusing Allah, the Sublime and Lofty, saying: 'How can You punish us and plunge us into the Fire while You did not send someone to announce what You wanted from us?' Just as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلَوۡ أَنَّآ أَهۡلَكۡنَٰهُم بِعَذَابٖ مِّن قَبۡلِهِۦ لَقَالُواْ رَبَّنَا لَوۡلَآ أَرۡسَلۡتَ إِلَيۡنَا رَسُولٗا فَنَتَّبِعَ ءَايَٰتِكَ مِن قَبۡلِ أَن نَّذِلَّ وَنَخۡزَىٰ ﴾

"And if We had destroyed them with a punishment before him surely they would say: 'Our Lord, if only You had sent us a messenger so that we might follow Your Signs before we were brought low and humiliated." [20:134]

In other words, if Allah had destroyed them with a punishment as a consequence for their disbelief before sending them a messenger, surely they would say: 'Why did You not send us a messenger so that we would know what You wanted, we could follow Your signs, and we could traverse upon the course which You wished?' Allah the Exalted by His mercy, wished that there would not remain a proof or excuse for anyone, so He sent the messengers and revealed the Books, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'No one loves excuses more than Allah, and for that reason He sent the givers of glad tidings and the warners.'[1]

6) To manage the affairs and policies of the people in general

Those who believe in the messengers and respond to them are a single community and people, and an affair does not become right for the community

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

unless it is under the authority of a leader to whom obedience is due, and the management of its affairs, care of its interests, and the realization of its objectives and goals are entrusted to him; the messenger is the best one to carry that out. So he is a symbol of the community and the guide to its Lord in affairs of the religion, thus it is only fitting that he be its leader in matters of their worldly lives; maintaining and safeguarding them from division, differing with one another, and falling into the abyss. He leads them and manages their affairs based on guidance from Allah the Exalted. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَا ٱلتَّوۡرَىٰةَ فِيهَا هُدٗى وَنُورٞۚ يَحۡكُمُ بِهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسۡلَمُواْ لِلَّذِينَ هَادُواْ ﴾

"Indeed We sent down the Torah, in it is guidance and a light; the prophets who submitted ruled the Jews by it."[5:44]

And Allah the Exalted said to His Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him):

﴿ وَأَنِ ٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعۡ أَهۡوَآءَهُمۡ وَٱحۡذَرۡهُمۡ أَن يَفۡتِنُوكَ عَنۢ بَعۡضِ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيۡكَ ﴾

"And rule between them with what Allah sent down, do not follow their desires, and beware of them that they entice you away from some of what Allah sent down to you."[5:49]

The prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'The prophets governed the Children of Isra'il; whenever a prophet passed away, a prophet followed him'[1].

The meaning of 'govern' is that they took charge of their affairs just as princes and governors do with citizens.

Eighthly: Characteristics of the Messengers

Considering that the messengers (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them) were ambassadors of Allah the Exalted to His creation, they established His commands and prohibitions through their proclamations; and He the Glorified to protect and safeguard them, necessitated that they be bestowed with all attributes of human perfection which would enable them to realize the purpose of their great mission in directing people to Allah the Exalted and guiding them to the right path. Thus the messengers embodied human perfection in so far as their highest form; for Allah the Exalted has selected them and chosen them for Himself through His

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

knowledge and wisdom. So they were had the purest hearts, the most honest characters, and the strongest intellects, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ ٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ حَيۡثُ يَجۡعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُۥ ﴾

"Allah is the most knowledgeable of where to place His message." [6:124]

So seeing that their function is performed upon mixing with people and associating with them, they had to have the most perfect and excellent of created forms, thus no defect was found in the character of a single one of them.

And seeing as their function also required dealing with the varying morals of human beings, their good and their evil, then they had to have the highest level of moral perfection; and that was in order for them to be able to confront the adversities and difficulties which faced them in the performance of their mission. Upon close examination of the life of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) that is found very obvious to the point that his wife Ā'ishah (may be pleased with her, when asked about his character, she said: 'His character was the Quran'[1]. All of the messengers (may peace be upon them) were like that and they were elevated examples of moral perfection.

In addition to what was mentioned previously of the perfection of the natural way and moral integrity of the messengers (may peace be upon them) likewise they possessed attributes that their mission and function, such as being human intermediaries between Allah the Exalted and His creation, demanded and they are attributes necessarily combined in every messenger; and they are:

1) Truthfulness

So the messenger is required to be truthful because he delivers the religion and laws of Allah the Exalted to people, and since the situation is as such, then it is impossible for Allah the Exalted to send a liar; and there are numerous verses in the Quran indicating the truthfulness of the messengers, such as the statement of Allah the Exalted:

﴿ وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِسۡمَٰعِيلَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ ٱلۡوَعۡدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولٗا نَّبِيّٗا ﴾

"And remember Isma'il in the Book; indeed he was true to his promise, and he was a messenger and a prophet."[19:54]

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad

Allah, the Glorified, also said:

﴿ وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِدۡرِيسَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقٗا نَّبِيّٗا ﴾

"And mention in the Book, Idris; indeed he was a truthful prophet." [19:56]

Before the Prophet (peace be upon him) was sent [as a prophet], he was given the nickname 'the truthful and trustworthy' among the Arabs.

2) Trustworthy

This attribute goes together with truthfulness since the liar is also not trustworthy, just as the traitor is not truthful; so it is inescapable that one who is truthful is also trustworthy, and the one who is trustworthy is truthful. The opposite of trustworthy is treacherous, and it is impossible that Allah, the Glorified and Exalted would entrust a traitor to convey His message to people because if it was allowed for the messenger to be a traitor, he would have surely altered the Divine laws and corrupted the rulings which he received from Allah the Exalted; then through that he would have destroyed the purpose of His message and it is rectification and acting by the commands of Allah the Exalted alone. Due to this, all of the messengers were trustworthy.

3) Intelligent

Given that the messenger is intelligent and smart he understands what is going on around him with prompt awareness, and he conducts himself according to what is demanded of the judicious, perfect mind. Intelligence is required for the messenger so that his is able to persuade those he invites of impartial and moderate people, as opposed to those who are zealously stubborn, and so that he is capable of eliminating their uncertainty and doubts.

4) Infallible

It is the immunity which Allah the Exalted has surrounded His prophets with so that they are safe from slipping into error, evil and sin cannot find a way to them, and so that they continue to be free from deficiencies or defects from the time of their being sent as prophets until their death. Thus Allah the Exalted has safeguarded and purified them from committing sins and disobedience; so there never occurred a major sin from them, whether intentional or out of forgetfulness, just as they cannot intentionally commit a minor sin. And whenever a minor sin happens, then they take the initiative in repenting from it without delay; that is because people follow the example of the messengers and imitate them, just as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

"And We have not sent a messenger except in order to be obeyed by the permission of Allah."[4:64]

Allah the Exalted also said:

﴿ لَّقَدۡ كَانَ لَكُمۡ فِي رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسۡوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرۡجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلۡيَوۡمَ ٱلۡأٓخِرَ ﴾

"Truly there has been for you in the messenger of Allah a good example, for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day."[33:21]

So if major disobedience has been possible concerning them, certainly being an example for others would have been denied to them.

As such, Allah has safeguarded them from forgetfulness in conveying the message; so they cannot forget anything with regards to what Allah the Exalted sent them with, just as Allah the Exalted said to His Messenger Mohammed (peace be upon him:

﴿ سَنُقۡرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنسَىٰٓ ﴾

"We will recite to you so you will not forget."[87:6]

Allah the Exalted also said:

﴿ وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلۡهَوَىٰٓ ٣ إِنۡ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحۡيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴾

"And he does not speak out of desire. Indeed it is but a revelation, inspired."[53:3-4]

Just as they are infallible in delivering what Allah the Exalted commanded to of His declaration, so it leads to their being just like the command of Allah without error, addition, or decrease.

Ninthly: The Miracles of the Messengers

The miracles of the messengers are signs which Allah performs at their hands, as a confirmation of them and a demonstration of the truth which they possess; and due to this Allah designated them in His Book as 'signs', meaning symbols showing their veracity.

The support of Allah for His messengers through miracles is from His perfect justice and mercy, His love for excuses and establishing the proof against the slaves since He did not send a prophet from among the prophets except he had a sign demonstrating his veracity in terms of what he declared, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ﴾

“Truly We have sent Our messengers with clear signs and We have sent down with them the Book and the Scales in order for people to exercise justice.”[57:25]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

‘There is not among the prophets a prophet except he was given from the signs what, in his case, people will believe based upon it; and the only thing I was given is a revelation that Allah revealed to me; so I hope to have a greater following than them on the Day of Resurrection’(1).

From the greatness of the wisdom of Allah the Exalted is that He made the miracles of every messenger of the type that achieved excellent results with regards to the people they were sent to; He made [the miracles] out of diligence in establishing the proof, and as a cut-off for excuses. So if the miracle of a messenger was brought in a way that those he was sent to were ignorant of it, certainly they would have an excuse in the lack of benefit from what they were ignorant of. Musa was sent to people where magic was prevalent among them, so Allah granted him signs that the power of the magicians could not surpass him in producing something similar. When the magicians saw that, they knew that it was not a matter of an act of magic, rather it was a Divine miracle with which Allah supported His prophet Musa. Then there were no magicians except that they believed and submitted to Allah.

When Allah the Exalted sent Isa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) to the children of Isra’il, the art of medicine was prevalent among them. So His wisdom demanded that He make a majority of Isa’s miracles similar to the work of doctors. Thus Allah cured upon his hands the leper and the blind - who was born blind - and he resuscitated the dead; and the means to cure leprosy, blindness, and other incurable diseases were not in the capability of the doctors in that time, yet Allah granted Isa (peace be upon him) the miracle of curing them with touch and supplication, as a support, confirmation and notice to them that this was from Allah the Exalted.

The same goes for our Prophet, Mohammed (peace be upon him- he was sent to a people of eloquence and articulation, while he (peace be upon him) was illiterate, not knowing how to read or write. When Allah the Exalted sent him He made his miracle from the type that the Arabs excelled in, and it was eloquent discourse. So Allah granted him the Quran and He challenged the Arabs to produce something

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

like it, and they failed. Then He challenged them to produce 10 chapters like it, and they failed. Then He challenged them to produce a single chapter like it, and they failed. Then He informed them that even if they gathered all the human beings and Jinn to help them to produce something similar to this Quran, they would not be able to do so, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ قُل لَّئِنِ ٱجْتَمَعَتِ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ هَـٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴾

"Say: If mankind and Jinn gathered together to produce something similar to this Quran, they could not produce it, even if they helped one another."[17:88]

Tenthly: The Revelation

It is the path or manner through which the communication of Allah the Exalted is carried out for His prophets and messengers in what He wishes, commands, and prohibits. This can be through a number of ways, among them are:

1) The dream while sleeping: Indeed the dreams of the prophets are true and are a revelation to them from Allah the Exalted. On authority of Ā'ishah (may be pleased with her: 'The first of what the messenger of Allah the Exalted began with of the revelation was the righteous vision while sleeping; thus he would not see a vision except it was like the break of dawn'(1).

2) The speaking of Allah the Exalted to His messengers from behind a veil: Just as Allah the Exalted spoke to His prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and just as He spoke to our Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) during the Night Journey and the Ascension.

3) A messenger from among the angels is sent: It is Jibreel (peace be upon him) predominantly.

Eleventhly: Our Obligation with Regards to the Messengers

Our monotheistic law imposes upon every Muslim certain rights with regards to the prophets and messengers of Allah in performing what Allah commands of honouring and respecting them and in acknowledgment of Allah's favouring them over the rest of creation with delivering His message and proclaiming His religion. Among these rights are:

1) Believing in all of them, and not differentiating between them; and that is through believing in some and disbelieving in others as in the circumstance of the

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Christians who believe in Isa and disbelieve in Mohammed, or the circumstance of the Jews who believe in Musa and disbelieve in Isa and Mohammed, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them; as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ قُولُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰٓ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ وَٱلۡأَسۡبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَآ أُوتِيَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمۡ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيۡنَ أَحَدٖ مِّنۡهُمۡ وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ مُسۡلِمُونَ ﴾

"They say: 'We believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to Ibrahim, Isma'il, Ishaq, Yaqub and al-Asbat; and what was given to Musa and Isa; and what was given to the prophets from their Lord- we do not differentiate between any of them, and we are to Him those who submit."[2:136]

That which is required to know here is that it is not permissible for anyone from the *Thaqalayn* (human beings and jinn) to follow the laws of any of the previous messengers after the dispatch of Mohammed (peace be upon him) the one who was sent to all people. This is because his law came to remove and cancel all the laws of the prophets before it; so there is no religion except that which Allah sent him with, and there is no following but this noble prophet, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَن يَبۡتَغِ غَيۡرَ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمِ دِينٗا فَلَن يُقۡبَلَ مِنۡهُ وَهُوَ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ﴾

"And whoever wishes for a religion other than Islam, then it will never be accepted from him and he will be from among the losers in the Afterlife."[3:85]

Allah the Exalted also said:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةٗ لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴾

"And We have not sent you except as a giver of glad tidings and warner to all mankind; however the majority of mankind does not know."[34:28]

2) Supporting and loving all of them and being weary of hating or having enmity for them; thus whoever hates a prophet from among the prophets, then he has disbelieved, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ مَن كَانَ عَدُوّٗا لِّلَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَجِبۡرِيلَ وَمِيكَىٰلَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَدُوّٞ لِّلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

"Whoever is an enemy to Allah, His angels, His messengers, Jibreel, and Mika'il, then indeed Allah is an enemy to the Disbelievers."[2:98]

3) Seeing them with an eye towards perfection and veneration; for it is not permissible for the Muslim to disparage any of them, rather it is required to believe that they carried out the message of Allah in the most perfect manner, and that they achieved the level of human perfection. Thus there is no deficiency to disgrace them and no defect to dishonour them. Allah the Exalted said after He mentioned a large group of prophets and messengers:

﴿وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ﴾

"And each of them We favoured over all the worlds."[6:86]

4) Repelling the extremism of those who are fanatical about them; such as the extremism of the Christians regarding the Messiah, son of Maryam (peace be upon him) when they call him 'the son of God', while he is only a slave and messenger of Allah, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُۥٓ أَلْقَىٰهَآ إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ﴾

"The Messiah, Isa, son of Maryam, is only a messenger of Allah, His Word that He cast towards Maryam, and a soul from Him."[4:171]

5) Sending blessings and peace upon them; for Allah the Exalted has related His preservation of the excellent praise upon His messengers, and the salutation of the various communities upon them after their time. Allah the Exalted said about Nuh:

﴿وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ٧٨ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ نُوحٍ فِى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ﴾

"And We left behind for him in the later generations- 'Peace be upon Nuh among all the world."[37:78-79]

He said about Ibrahim:

﴿وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ١٠٨ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ﴾

"And We left behind for him in the later generations- 'Peace be upon Ibrahim'." [37:108-109]

And Allah the Exalted also said:

﴿وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَى ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ﴾

"And peace be upon the messengers."[37:181]

6) The lack of differentiation between them; since that is a type of boasting and reducing their due. Not differentiating between them is from the completeness of their honour, dignity, and the perfection of belief in them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited from differentiation, when he said:

'Do not compare the prophets of Allah in order to determine who deserves preference'[1]

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

The Seal of the Prophets Mohammed ibn Abdullah

Truly the narrations from our Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) are not like the narrations of anyone else; they are narrations from the greatest of mankind that Allah the Exalted created; the most perfect of human beings that walked upon the face of the earth; the most preferred of all messengers that Allah the Exalted sent to humanity; so he is therefore the head of the worlds, leader of the pious, seal of the prophets, and beloved to the Lord of the worlds.

In these few pages we will attempt to acquaint the dear reader with some of the Prophet Mohammed's character, life and story.

So we begin and with Allah is all success:

The Prophet Mohammed's full name is: Mohammed ibn Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib, ibn Hashim ibn Abd Manaf. His lineage ends at the Prophet of Allah Ismail ibn Ibrahim (peace be upon them). His mother was Aminah bint Wahb ibn Abd Manaf bin Zahrah. His mother had given birth to a child with a sound physique, handsome appearance, and strong body and his birth was in the Year of the Elephant, corresponding to the year 571 after the birth (of Jesus).

He was born in the revered city of Mecca and he grew up there as an orphan. His father had died while his mother was still pregnant with him then his mother died while he was only six years old. His grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, provided for him until he too died, and then his uncle, Abu Talib provided for him and it is mostly under his care and protection that he grew up.

He worked as a shepherd of sheep in his youth just as is the tradition of Allah regarding His prophets. He (peace be upon him) said: 'Allah did not send a prophet except he was a shepherd of sheep'. His companions asked him: 'Even you?' He said: 'Yes. I used to shepherd them for the price of a few coins on behalf of the people of Mecca'.[1] Then he worked as a merchant and married the virtuous and intelligent lady Khadijah bint Khuwaylid al-Qarshiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) from whom he sired the following male children: al-Qasim, from whom he took his honourific from; and Abdullah. Among the female children he sired are: Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum, and Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with them all). He sired Ibrahim from Lady Maria the Copt who was gifted to him by al-Muqawqis, the King of Egypt at the time. All of his sons died during his lifetime while they were still young. As for his daughters, then they all died as well in his

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

lifetime however after they reached adulthood, became Muslims, and married, except for Fatimah, who died six months after him (may Allah be pleased with her).

Our Prophet (peace be upon him) grew upon with a noble and virtuous character and a praiseworthy and courteous disposition to the point that he became known among his people by the honorific- the truthful and trustworthy. Despite the prevalence of evil customs which existed in his time and environment like drinking alcohol, he did not participate in any of that. So he never drank alcohol. Despite his people’s worship of idols and false deities which they made with their own hands - and the worship of idols was very widespread among the Arabs, thus each tribe had its own idol which they worshipped beside Allah the Exalted - in spite of all that, Allah kept him safe from that. So he never prostrated to an idol, he never attended any gatherings in which they would practice their rituals of disbelief, and he never did anything that his people did of vulgar and abominable actions. His character and personality attest to the preference and choice of Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, for him to guide people to Allah, return them to the correct path, and the healthy natural disposition which is the worship of Allah alone without assigning partners to Him.

At the beginning of the fortieth year of his life, Allah sent to him the one trusted with revelation, Jibreel (peace be upon him) to inform him that he is the messenger of Allah to all people, and to inform him that he is responsible for inviting people to worship Allah alone; he was also responsible for inviting people to the religion of Islam which Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, is pleased with, and the religion with which He sealed the Messages. Allah sent the Quran to him in order for him to recite it to people, warn them through it, and for it to be a code and methodology for their lives.

From the time, the prophet (peace be upon him) was active in calling people to worship Allah alone, to abandon the worship of false deities, and he took up reciting to them the words of Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, which was descending upon him his people rejected him, opposed him, harmed him, accused him of madness at times, of witchcraft at times, and they took to repelling people from him, preventing them from following him and attesting to his veracity. And despite all of that, some people believed in him, and at their forefront was his wife, Khadijah, his close friend Abu Bakr, and his nephew Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with all of them). Then the entrance of people into the religion of Allah followed without interruption, so the harassment of the polytheists grew more intense, and his companions and followers were subjected to the strongest types of harassment and torture to the point some of them were killed. So he commanded his companions to immigrate to Medina, then he immigrated there as well. It is

there that Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, made helpers and supporters to assist him, and to assist His religion until Allah firmly established him and His religion, and Islam spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula. Mecca was conquered as his city and the holy city of Allah; the idols were demolished; the towering graves were levelled - the ones that were elevated above ground - in compliance with proper belief, as an expression of the Oneness of Allah, and as a declaration of the end of the state based on polytheism and idolatry in the Arabian Peninsula. Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said to Abil-Hayyaj al-Asdi: 'Should I not dispatch you upon the same thing that the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) dispatched me?' And the dispatch of Ali was after the conquest of Mecca; 'That you not leave a statue except that you efface it nor a raised grave except you level it to the ground'.(1) Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, made him happy through the honour of Islam and the rise of the Muslims. Then Allah took him when he was 63 years old, 40 of which were before prophethood, and 23 as a prophet and messenger.

With him, Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, sealed the prophets and messengers, and He sealed all laws with his law; thus there is no prophet coming after him, no law after his law, and his law abrogated all previous laws. So a person does not believe until he believes in the Prophet Mohammed and follows him in his religion and law, as he (peace be upon him) said:

'By He in whose Hand is the soul of Mohammed! A person from this era does not hear of me, whether a Jew or Christian, and then dies without believing in that which I was sent with, except he is among the companions of the Fire'.(2)

After Allah, the Lofty and Sublime, took his soul, his companions followed his path, conveyed his invitation, conquered cities with Islam, and they spread the religion of truth until it reached the east and west of the world. And his religion will remain until the Day of Resurrection.

The Character of the Prophet

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was the most excellent of people in character, and the highest of them in virtues and manners- he was distinguished by that before the period of prophethood, so how would his character be afterwards? His Lord, the Blessed and Exalted has addressed him with His statement to him:

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

﴿ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴾

"And verily, you (O Mohammed SAW) are on an exalted standard of character."[68:4]

His Lord had cultivated him thus his manners were the best, and He raised him, thus his upbringing was the best. His character was the Noble Quran, he was taught by it, and he taught people by it. Among the noble attributes of his character are:

He (peace be upon him) was the most forbearing of people, their most fair, most forgiving, most generous, and most brave. He was the most humble of people- he mended his own sandals, sewed his garments, and he helped his wife at home and made her happy. He responded to everyone's invitation and accepted gifts even if they were small and he would reciprocate them. He would get angry for the sake of His Lord and not for his own sake. He would go hungry at times and fasten a stone to his stomach out of hunger, and at times he would eat whatever was brought; he would not refuse anything permissible he found, and he never found fault with food; if he had an appetite for something, he would eat it, and if he did not like something, he left it alone. He would wear anything permissible he could find, and he would ride whatever was available- at time a horse, camel, mule, or donkey, or he would walk barefooted. He would sit and eat with the poor, and he would maintain ties with his relatives without distinguishing between who were best among them. He would not be stern, harsh or boisterous - meaning scream and shout- in the markets, and he would not return evil with evil, rather he would forgive and pardon; he would accept the excuse of whoever presented one to him. He would joke and not say but the truth, and he would laugh without guffawing. He was the most shy of people. He would visit the sick and attend funerals and he would walk among his enemies without a bodyguard. He would not disdain a poor person for his poverty nor respect a king for his kingdom. It was from his character that he would initiate the greeting with anyone he met, and when he encountered any of his companions he would initiate the handshake with him. No one came to him with a need except he would stand alongside him in his need. He would call his companions by their honorifics, meaning he would address one of his companions by saying: 'Oh father of so-and-so', out of respect for them and to win over their hearts. He was the most merciful, best towards, and most helpful of people to others.

He would prefer ease and dislike difficulty, and he would not confront anyone with something they might dislike; anyone who saw him was inclined to be in awe of him and whoever mingled with him loved him. He would not let time pass without performing some deed for Allah the Exalted or doing what would

inevitably benefit him. These are some of his noble characteristics and gracious attributes, so blessed be the one who cultivated him, taught him and raised him.

The glad tidings of the previous prophets regarding Mohammed

The Noble Quran has indeed related to us about the glad tidings of the previous prophets regarding Mohammed (peace be upon him) being sent and about his being mentioned in previously revealed texts. For example, Allah the Lofty and Sublime says:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ لَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُكُم مِّن كِتَٰبٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا
مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِۦ وَلَتَنصُرُنَّهُۥ ۚ قَالَ ءَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِى ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَقْرَرْنَا ۚ قَالَ فَٱشْهَدُوا۟ وَأَنَا۠
مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ﴾

And (remember) when Allah took the Covenant of the prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah (understanding of the Laws of Allah, etc.), and afterwards there will come to you a messenger (Mohammed SAW) confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said: "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My Covenant (which I conclude with you)?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses (for this)."[3:81]

Thus this verse indicates - as some of the people of knowledge said - that Allah took a covenant and pact from every prophet that if Mohammed (peace be upon him) was sent in their lifetime, they would believe in him and abandon their code of law for his. It is understood from this that mention of Mohammed existed among all previous prophets.

Allah the Lofty and Sublime spoke about him in the course of a discussion about the people of Musa (peace be upon him):

﴿عَذَابِىٓ أُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَنْ أَشَآءُ ۖ وَرَحْمَتِى وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۚ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِىَّ ٱلْأُمِّىَّ ٱلَّذِى يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا
عِندَهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ
ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"(As to) My Punishment I afflict therewith whom I will and My Mercy embraces all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who are the Muttaqun, and give Zakat; and those who believe in Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs and revelations, etc.); Those who follow the messenger, the prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Mohammed) whom they find written with them in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) (John xiv, 16), - he commands them for Al-Ma'ruf; and forbids them from Al-Munkar; he allows them as lawful At-Taiyibat, and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khaba'ith, he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah's Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Mohammed SAW), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Quran) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful."[7:156-157]

And Allah has informed us that the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) informed his people about the coming of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) as Allah said:

﴿وَإِذۡ قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيۡكُم مُّصَدِّقٗا لِّمَا بَيۡنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوۡرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرَۢا بِرَسُولٖ
يَأۡتِي مِنۢ بَعۡدِي ٱسۡمُهُۥٓ أَحۡمَدُۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالُواْ هَٰذَا سِحۡرٞ مُّبِينٞ﴾

"And (remember) when Isa (Jesus), son of Mary, said: "O Children of Isra'il! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Torah before Me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose Name shall be Ahmed. But when he came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic." [61:6]

And Ahmed is from the names of our Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) as confirmed by the narration of Jabir ibn Mut'im in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"I have several names: I am Mohammed and I am Ahmad, and I am al-Mahi (the effacer) by whom Allah effaces disbelief. I am al-Hashir (the gatherer) at whose feet mankind will be gathered, and I am "Aqib (the last to come) after whom there will be no Prophet. "[1]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Moreover, in another narration the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"I have been written with Allah as the Seal of the Prophets, while Adam was still in his mould of clay. I will explain this to you: I am the answer to the prayer of my father Abraham, the glad tidings of Jesus, and the vision that my mother saw in her dream when she gave birth to me. She saw that light emanated from her that filled the palaces of the Levant."

In addition, a description of him is mentioned in the Torah as mentioned in the following narration on the authority of Ata ibn Yasar:

I met Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas and asked him, "Tell me about the description of Allah's Apostle which is mentioned in the Torah. He replied, 'Yes. By Allah, he is described in the Torah with some of the qualities attributed to him in the Quran as follows:

"O Apostle! We have sent you as a witness and a giver of glad tidings (to the faithful believers), and a warner (to the unbelievers) and a guardian of the uneducated. You are My slave and My messenger. I have named you "al-Mutawakkil" You are neither discourteous, harsh nor a noise-maker in the markets and you do not do evil to those who do evil to you, but you deal with them with forgiveness and kindness. Allah will not let him die till he makes straight the crooked people by making them say: "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah," With which will be opened blind eyes and deaf ears and enveloped hearts."[1]

These tidings were widespread before the appearance of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and it was the Jews and Christians who spread the news claiming that they would follow him upon his emergence. Unfortunately, when he was sent and despite their recognising him through his qualities, they disbelieved in him and fought against him as Allah the Exalted has said in the Quran:

﴿فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مَّا عَرَفُواْ كَفَرُواْ بِهِۦ﴾

"Then when there came to them that which they had recognised, they disbelieved in it." [2:89]

This was at a time when the people of al-Madinah who were told the news of his coming by the Jews benefitted from it by believing and following him. It is from them that many of the narrations regarding his emergence came to us from the Jews.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

His Miracles (peace be upon him)

Allah the Exalted would support his prophets with signs and miracles, which they would perform, that were out of the ordinary and would help prove to their people that they were on the truth. Therefore, there was no prophet except that Allah sent him with signs proving his truthfulness as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said: There has never been a Prophet amongst the Prophets who was not bestowed with a sign amongst the signs which were bestowed (on earlier Prophets) Humans believed in it and verily I have been conferred upon with the revelation (the Holy Quran) which Allah revealed to me. I hope that I will have the greatest following on the Day of Resurrection.(1)

Moreover, our Prophet (peace be upon him) was given many of these signs and miracles by Allah proving his truthfulness and some of the main ones are:

1) The Holy Quran

The Eternal Book of Allah that contains no inconsistencies or alterations as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿وَإِنَّهُۥ لَكِتَٰبٌ عَزِيزٌ ٤١ لَّا يَأْتِيهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِۦ ۖ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ﴾

"And verily, it is an honourable respected Book (because it is Allah's speech, and He has protected it from corruption) falsehood cannot come to it from before or behind it. Sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise." [41:41-42]

The Arabian people were known for their eloquence, rhetoric and clarity in speech and the Holy Quran challenged these qualities and challenged them to bring one verse similar to that of the Quran, but they were unable to do so. The Quran then informed them that if all Jinn and humankind were to get together in an attempt to reproduce something similar to the Quran they would not be able to do so.

﴿ قُل لَّئِنِ ٱجْتَمَعَتِ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴾

"Say: "If the mankind and the jinns were together to produce the like of This Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another." [17:88]

2) The Miraculous Nightly Journey al-Isra wal-Miraaj is also one of his greatest miracles. Allah speaks about it as:

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

﴿سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ لَيْلًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْأَقْصَا﴾

"Glorified be He (Allah) who took his slave (Mohammed) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid-al-Harâm (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem)" [17:1]

The Angel Gabriel came to him at the Sacred Mosque in Mecca with the flying beast known named Buraq and they travelled together from there to Jerusalem where the Prophet (peace be upon him) led all the Prophets (peace be upon them) in prayer. After completing the prayer he ascended with the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) into the heavens until he exceeded the highest stages and reached the Lote Tree where he saw many magnificent things including the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) in his real state. He then came near to his Lord and spoke to him and was awarded the five daily prayers.

﴿أَفَتُمَٰرُونَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾ إِذْ يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ مَا زَاغَ ٱلْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾ لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰٓ﴾

Will you then dispute with him about what he saw and indeed he saw him Gabriel at a second descent (i.e. another time) near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha [lote-tree of the utmost boundary (beyond which none can pass)] near it is the Paradise of abode. When that covered the lote-tree, which did cover it! The sight (of Prophet Mohammed) turned not aside (right or left), nor it transgressed beyond (the) limit (ordained for it). Indeed he did see, of the greatest signs, of his Lord (Allah) [53:12-18]

Then he returned to Mecca and this whole journey took place within a part of the night by the grace of Allah who has power over all things.

3) Curing the sick was also one of his miracles and there are numerous examples of this from his lifetime. One such incident occurred with Ali ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) in the expedition of Khaibar when he had a complication in his eyes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) called for him to come closer and blew in his eyes which immediately cured them by the permission of Allah. There are also numerous other miracles that Allah gifted the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) to prove his trustworthiness and support him.

The Special Characteristics of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him)

Allah the most Exalted had blessed the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) with many special characteristics and virtues that were not given to other messengers or anyone else in creation and the Prophet Mohammed mentioned these divinely given qualities in numerous narrations: "I have been awarded five

things that were not given to anyone before me…”(1) And in one narration: “I have been given preference over other Prophet with six things…”(2) and in another narration: “I have been given things that no other prophet before has received…”(3)

Below we present the most important of these characteristics and virtues.

1) His message is for all of Jinn and humankind and they must all follow and believe in his message in order to be successful. Allah has said:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةٗ لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗا ﴾

“And we have not sent you except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind.” [34:28]

And Allah said:

﴿ تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِي نَزَّلَ ٱلۡفُرۡقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِهِۦ لِيَكُونَ لِلۡعَٰلَمِينَ نَذِيرًا ﴾

“Blessed be he who sent down the criterion (i.e. this Qur'ân) to his slave that He may be a warner to mankind and jinns”.

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him said)

“I have been conferred with five things which were not granted to anyone before me…every apostle was sent particularly to his own people, whereas I have been sent to all people.”(4) And he said:

“By Him in whose hands my soul is, there is not a single person in this nation; Jew or Christian who hears about me and dies without believing in what I have brought except that he will enter the fire.(5)

2) He is the seal of all Prophets and Apostles as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَآ أَحَدٖ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمۡ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ﴾

“Mohammed is not the father of any man among you, but He is the Messenger of Allâh and the seal of the Prophets.” [33:40]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(4) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by Muslim.

And the Prophet (peace be upon him) said

“My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me is that of a man who constructed a house nicely and beautifully, except for the space of one brick in a corner. People go around it and wonder at its beauty, but say: 'Only if this brick be put in its place!' So I am that brick and I am the last of the prophets.”(1)

3) His nation is the best of all nations and will make up most of the occupants of Paradise. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ﴾

“You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and All that Islam has forbidden), and you believe In Allah.” [3:110]

And on the authority of Abdullah ibn Masood (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrates:

While we were in the company of the Prophet in a tent he said, "Would it please you to be one fourth of the people of Paradise?" We said, “Yes.” He said, “Would it please you to be one-third of the people of Paradise?” We said, “Yes.” He said, “Would it please you to be half of the people of Paradise?” We said, “Yes.” Thereupon he said, “I hope that you will be one half of the people of Paradise, for none will enter Paradise but a Muslim soul, and you people, in comparison to the people who associate others in worship with Allah, are like a white hair on the skin of a black ox, or a black hair on the skin of a red ox.”(2)

4) He is the leader of all humankind on the Day of Resurrection as is stated on the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“I am the leader of the sons of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, and the first person, for whom the grave is opened, and the first one to intercede and the first one whose intercession will be accepted.”(3)

5) He will be endowed with the privilege of great intercession when Allah will judge the people and they will seek help from the prophets and none will be able to help, but the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and this intercession is mentioned in the Quran:

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Muslim.

﴿عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَبۡعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامٗا مَّحۡمُودٗا﴾

"It may be that your Lord will raise you to Maqâman Mahmûda (a station of praise and glory)" [17:79]

6) He is the possessor of al-Wasila which is the highest stage in Paradise that has only been given to one person. We find the following in a Prophetic tradition on the authority of Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-Aas who reported Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) as saying:

When you hear the caller to prayer repeat what he says, then send salutations on me for everyone who sends salutations on me will receive ten blessings from Allah; then beg from Allah al-Wasila for me, which is a rank in Paradise fitting for only one of Allah's servants, and I hope that I may be that one. If anyone who asks that I be given al-Wasila, he will be assured of my intercession.(1)

In addition to the numerous other special characteristics and virtues that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has been blessed with by Allah that show the high status that he holds with his Lord in this world and the Hereafter.

The Prophet's Rights over his Nation

It is required from the nation of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) to be dutiful to him in many ways including the following:

1) It is obligatory to believe that the Prophet (peace be upon him) conveyed the trust that he was endowed with by passing on the message of Allah and advising his nation. There is no goodness, but that the Prophet informed and encouraged his nation about it; and there is no evil but that the Prophet warned and forbade his nation from it. Allah says in the Quran:

﴿ٱلۡيَوۡمَ أَكۡمَلۡتُ لَكُمۡ دِينَكُمۡ وَأَتۡمَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ نِعۡمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمَ دِينٗا﴾

"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." [5:3]

And in the Farewell Sermon he gave the companions a most eloquent sermon in which he informed them of their obligation to their Lord and what was forbidden upon them. He then advised them to adhere to the Book of Allah and asked them:

"You will be asked about me, so what will you say?" They answered with one voice: "We bear witness that you have conveyed Allah's message, performed your

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

duty and that you have meant goodness for us." He then pointed his index finger towards the sky and then to the people and said: "O Allah, be witness; O Allah, be witness; O Allah, be witness."

The companion Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) said

"The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) did not even leave a bird flapping its wings in the sky except that he mentioned to us knowledge regarding it."(1)

2) Loving him more than a person loves his own self and his family as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

"None of you truly believes until he loves me more than he loves his father, his son, and all people."(2)

And when Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) told the Prophet (peace be upon him) "O Allah's Apostle! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self." The Prophet said, "No, by Him in whose hand my soul is, (you will not have complete faith) till I am dearer to you than your own self." Then 'Umar said to him, "However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self." The Prophet said, "Now, O 'Umar, (you have reached complete faith)."(3)

3) Honouring him, exalting him and always holding him in high esteem are from the rights of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that are obligatory upon all Muslims as stated by Allah:

﴿ لِّتُؤۡمِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ ﴾

"In order that you (O mankind) may believe in Allah and his Messenger and that you assist and honour Him." [48:9]

Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that to assist him means to hold him in high esteem and to respect him after his passing away in the same way that one would do during his life. This is achieved by honouring his remembrance, his statements, his actions and his life.

4) Requesting for blessings and sending salutations on the Prophet (peace be upon him) frequently as commanded by Allah the Exalted in the Quran:

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِيِّۚ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ صَلُّواْ عَلَيۡهِ وَسَلِّمُواْ تَسۡلِيمًا ﴾

"Allah sends his Salât (Graces, Honours, blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet and also his angels too (ask Allâh to bless and forgive Him). O you who believe! send your Salât on (ask Allâh to bless) Him and (you should) greet (salute) Him with the Islamic way of greeting." [33:56]

5) Not to be excessive in our praise and regard for the Prophet (peace be upon him) as this causes him great harm. Allah commanded His Prophet to address his nation with the following words:

﴿ قُلۡ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُكُمۡ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمۡ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۖ فَمَن كَانَ يَرۡجُواْ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلۡيَعۡمَلۡ عَمَلٗا صَٰلِحٗا وَلَا
يُشۡرِكۡ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَحَدَۢا ﴾

"Say "I am only a man like you. It has been inspired to me that your God is one God so whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner In the worship of his Lord." [18:110]

And on the authority of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who heard the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) say:

"Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary (peace be upon them) for I am only a slave; so call me the Slave of Allah and His Apostle."(1)

Therefore, from this we can understand the warning given in being excessive in praising him with qualities that are only fitting for Allah the Lord of the Worlds.

6) Loving and being loyal to the companions, extended family and wives of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and to never detract, curse or allege anything against them. Allah has made it obligatory upon this nation to be loyal to the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and induced those who came after them to seek forgiveness for them and to request that no hatred towards them should be placed in their hearts. So we find that Allah the Exalted after mentioning the Emigrants and Helpers (companions of the Prophet) in the Quran said:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَا وَلِإِخۡوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِٱلۡإِيمَٰنِ وَلَا تَجۡعَلۡ فِي
قُلُوبِنَا غِلّٗا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٞ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

And those who came after them say: "Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful. " [59:10]

We also find in the Prophetic tradition the following narration on the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) who heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) say:

"Do not curse my companions. Do not curse my companions. If any of you were to spend in charity the weight of Mount Uhud in gold, it still would not reach the measure of a handful or half and handful of what they did."[(1)]

These are some of the rights of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that are obligatory upon his nation. We conclude this chapter by asking Allah to make us amongst those who practice these rights and to make our feet firm on His religion; and raise us on the Day of Resurrection under the flank of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as only Allah Glorified is He, is capable of this.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

The Fourth Pillar

Belief in the Holy Books

The tremendous mercy of Allah the Exalted towards His creation resulted in Him sending apostles to remind and direct humankind to the path of truth and guidance after they had fallen into the clutches of polytheism and paganism deviating from the predisposition that they were created upon by Allah. It was from the supreme favours of Allah that he revealed the Holy Books to these apostles containing in them moral lessons and guidance for all humanity. The books were to serve as a syllabus for human life lighting for them the way and guiding them to all that contains goodness and happiness in this life and the hereafter. Therefore, from the pillars of faith is to have an unflinching belief in the revelation of these books to their respected apostles and in this chapter we will throw light on this crucial pillar and what it entails and we ask Allah the Exalted to bless our efforts with acceptance.

Firstly: The definition of Book

The books contain the teachings that Allah revealed to His apostles as a mercy and guidance for them and a means of their attaining happiness in this world and the hereafter. The books that Allah the Exalted has informed us about in the Quran are the following:

1) The Torah: This is the Book of Allah that He revealed to the Apostle Moses (peace be upon him) as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا ٱلْقُرُونَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ ﴾

"And indeed we gave Mûsa (Moses), after we had destroyed the generations of old, the Scripture [the Taurât (Torah)] as an enlightenment for mankind, and a guidance and Mercy, that they might Remember." [28:43]

And in the Prophetic traditions we find the following statement: "Go to Moses who spoke to Allah and received from Him the Torah."[1]

2) The Gospels: This is the Book of Allah that He revealed to the Apostle Jesus the son of Mary (peace be upon them) as Allah has stated in the Quran:

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

﴿وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ
وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

"And In their footsteps, we sent Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), confirming the Taurât (Torah) that had come before him, and we gave Him the Injeel (Gospel), In which was guidance and light and confirmation of the Taurât (Torah) that had come before it, a guidance and an admonition for the pious." [5:46]

3) The Psalms: This is the Book of Allah that He revealed to the Apostle Dawood (peace be upon them) as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا﴾

"Verily, we have inspired You (O Mohammed) as we inspired Nûh (Noah) and the Prophets after him; we (also) inspired Ibrâhim (Abraham), Ismâ'il (Ishmael), Ishâque (Isaac), Ya'qûb (Jacob), and AlAsbât [the twelve sons of Ya'qûb (Jacob)], 'Iesa (Jesus), Ayub (Job), Yûnus (Jonah), Hârûn (Aaron), and Sulaimân (Solomon), and to Dawûd (David) we gave the Zabûr (Psalms)." [4:163]

4) The scriptures of Abraham and Moses: These have been mentioned in two places in the Holy Quran firstly in the Chapter of the Star in the following verses:

﴿أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِى صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَلَّا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ﴾

"Or is He not informed with what is In the Scripture of Mûsa (Moses) and of Ibrâhim (Abraham) who conveyed All that (What Allah ordered Him to do or convey)" [53:36-37]

And secondly in the Chapter of the Most High in the following verses:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ وَذَكَرَ ٱسْمَ رَبِّهِۦ فَصَلَّىٰ ﴿١٥﴾ بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿١٦﴾ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ
﴿١٧﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَفِى ٱلصُّحُفِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾ صُحُفِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ﴾

"Indeed whosoever purifies himself (by avoiding polytheism and accepting Islâmic Monotheism) shall achieve success, and remembers (glorifies) the Name of his Lord (worships none but Allah), and prays. Nay, you prefer the life of This world although the Hereafter is better and more lasting. Verily! This is In the former scriptures, the scriptures of Abraham and Moses." [87:14-19]

Hence, we observe that Allah the Exalted informed us of portions of what was revealed to the Prophet Abraham and Moses (peace be upon them).

5) The Holy Quran: This is the Book of Allah that He revealed to our Apostle Mohammed (peace be upon him) and it is the final and most sacred and complete of all Sacred Books abrogating those that came before it. It was revealed to all people from the Jinn and humankind. Allah has stated:

﴿ وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ﴾

"And we have sent down to you (O Mohammad) the Book (this Quran) in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it and a criterion over it (old scriptures)" [5:48]

The Holy Quran is the criterion over all the previous Holy Scriptures bearing witness over the facts contained in them as Allah the Exalted has stated:

﴿ قُلْ أَىُّ شَىْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَٰدَةً ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ شَهِيدٌۢ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَأُوحِىَ إِلَىَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانُ لِأُنذِرَكُم بِهِۦ وَمَنۢ بَلَغَ ﴾

"Say (O Mohammed): "What thing is the most great in witness?" say: "Allah is witness between me and you; This Quran has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach." [6:19]

The Holy Quran has been given many names and the most famous of these are:

The Quran, The Criterion, The Book, The Revealed and The Reminder.

Secondly: The ruling of believing in the Holy Books

Belief in the books that Allah has revealed upon His apostles is one of the great pillars of faith and one of the main principles of Islam without which one does not have true faith until they believe in it as Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴾

"O you who believe! Believe In Allah, and his Messenger (Mohammed), and the Book which He has sent down to his Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down to those before (him), and whosoever disbelieves In Allah, his angels, his Books, his Messengers, and the Last day, then indeed He has strayed far away." [4:136]

Therefore, Allah has ordered His believing slaves to believe in Him, His messenger Mohammed (peace be upon him) and the book that was revealed to him – The Holy Quran- and all those books that were revealed before including the Torah, the Gospels, the Psalms, and the Holy Scriptures. Then at the end of the verse Allah explains that anyone who disbelieves in any of the pillars of faith –such as believing in His books- then they will have gone very far in straying from the truth.

Thirdly: How to believe in the Holy Books

Belief in the Books of Allah the Exalted, require that we believe and accept numerous conditions in order to fully realise our belief. These are:

1) The firm conviction that these books were revealed by Allah and they are His speech and not the speech of anyone else and He actually spoke these words as He wanted to and in the way that he wanted to.

2) The belief that all Holy Books call to the worship of Allah and they came with goodness, guidance, and light.

3) The belief in the books that Allah has named and which have been specifically mentioned by His apostles and these are: The Quran, The Torah, The Gospels, The Psalms and the scriptures of Abraham and Moses. As regards those books that were not named we believe in them generally as Allah has commanded his Apostle when he said:

﴿وَقُلْ ءَامَنتُ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِن كِتَـٰبٍ﴾

"Say: "I believe in whatsoever Allah has sent down of the Book [all the Holy Books, This Quran and the Books of the old]." [42:15)

4) Firm conviction in every authentic in the Divine Books such as everything that is contained in the Quran and the portions of the previous Holy Books that have not been corrupted or altered in any way.

5) The firm conviction that the Holy Quran has abrogated all previous books and scriptures that were revealed. Allah has caused for all previous commandments to expire except those that the Quran has affirmed and it is not permissible for anyone from Jinn or humankind irrespective of whether they believe in the previous books or not to attempt to worship Allah except through the Quran; judging or practicing according to the previous Holy Books is wholly unacceptable as Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِۦ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَٰلَمِينَ نَذِيرًا﴾

"Blessed be He who sent down the criterion (i.e. This Quran) to his slave (Mohammed) that He may be a warner to all creation." [25:1]

And He said:

﴿يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا كُنتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَن كَثِيرٍ ۚ قَدْ جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَٰبٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

"O people of the Scripture now has come to you Our Messenger (Mohammed) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and passing over (i.e. leaving out without explaining) much. Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light (Prophet Mohammed) and a plain Book (this Quran)" [5:15]

And Allah in commanding His apostle to judge between the People of the Scripture with the Quran said:

﴿فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ﴾

"So judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires, diverging away from the Truth that has come to you." [5:48]

Fourthly: The alteration committed by the People of the Book to the Holy Scriptures

Allah the Exalted has informed us in the Quran that the Jews and Christians corrupted and altered what Allah had revealed to them as Allah said firstly regarding the Jews:

﴿أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا۟ لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"Do you (faithful believers) covet that they will believe in your religion in spite of the fact that a party of them (Jewish rabbis) used to hear the word of Allah [the Torah], then they used to change it knowingly after they understood it? [2:75]

And regarding the Christians He said:

﴿ يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمۡ كَثِيرٗا مِّمَّا كُنتُمۡ تُخۡفُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَيَعۡفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٖ ﴾

"O people of the Scripture now has come to you Our Messenger (Mohammed) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and passing over (i.e. leaving out without explaining) much." [5:15]

And there are many other verses of the Quran and Prophetic traditions that state how they would alter their Sacred Scriptures. As for the Gracious Quran, it is free from any alteration or corruption and is preserved and protected by Allah as He has promised when He said:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحۡنُ نَزَّلۡنَا ٱلذِّكۡرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴾

"Verily it is we who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Quran) and surely, we will Guard it." [15:9]

Fifthly: The specialisation of belief in the Quran

The Holy Quran is the criterion over all previous Sacred Scriptures and abrogates all which has become before it. It is the only Book through which Allah can be worshipped by both Jinn and humankind after the advent of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and the revelation of the Quran upon him. It is for this reason that the Holy Quran has numerous special requirements of us that we must learn and implement in order to fully believe in it, these are:

1) To believe in its message and the comprehensiveness of its Sacred Laws which were revealed for both Jinn and humankind for it is not possible for them except to believe in it as Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿ تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِي نَزَّلَ ٱلۡفُرۡقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِهِۦ لِيَكُونَ لِلۡعَٰلَمِينَ نَذِيرًا ﴾

"Blessed be He who sent down the criterion (i.e. this Quran) to his slave (Mohammed) that he may be a warner to mankind and jinn." [25:1]

2) To believe that the Quran has abrogated all previous Divine Scriptures and it is not permissible for the Christians and Jews or anyone else after the revelation of the Quran to worship Allah except through the Quran. There is no religion except

that which has come through the Quran and there is no worship of Allah except that which has been sanctioned through the Quran. Everything that has been made permissible is through the Quran only and everything that has been made forbidden is through the Quran only and not through any other Scripture as Allah has made clear:

﴿ وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَـٰمِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ ﴾

And whoever seeks a Religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter He will be one of the losers.[3:85]

3) The graciousness and facilitation of the Sacred Laws of Islam that were revealed in the Quran as opposed to the Sacred Laws of the previous scriptures which where full of restrictions and burdens that were made obligatory over the previous nations as Allah the Exalted stated in the Quran:

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِىَّ ٱلْأُمِّىَّ ٱلَّذِى يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ
يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَـٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَـٰٓئِثَ
وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَٱلْأَغْلَـٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ﴾

Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Mohammed) whom they find written with them in the Torah and the Gospel - He commands them for Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of All kinds, and All that Islam has forbidden); He allows them as lawful At-Taiyibât [(i.e. All good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.], and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabâ'ith (i.e. All evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods, etc.), He releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah's Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them." [7:157]

4) The Holy Quran is the only Divine Book that Allah has guaranteed to protect and preserve from any alteration in its exact wording and meanings as Allah has said in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَـٰفِظُونَ ﴾

"Verily it is we who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Quran) and surely, we will Guard it." [15:9]

And Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ لَّا يَأْتِيهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِۦ ۖ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴾

"Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it (it is) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of All praise". [41:42]

5) Verily Allah has revealed in the Quran everything that humankind requires in both their worldly and spiritual needs, in their livelihoods and in their provisions for the hereafter. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ تِبْيَٰنًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

"One day we shall raise from all Peoples a witness against from amongst themselves: and we shall bring Thee As a witness against these (thy and we have sent down to Thee the Book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, glad tidings to Muslims. [16:89]

And Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن شَىْءٍ ﴾

"We have neglected nothing In the Book, then unto their Lord they (all) shall be gathered." [6:38]

6) Allah the Exalted has made easy the remembrance and understanding of the Quran and this is its unique features as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴾

"And we have indeed made the Quran easy to understand and remember, then is there any that will remember (or receive admonition"؟[54:17]

7) The Holy Quran contains the summary of all divine teachings contained in the previous scriptures and all principles conveyed by the apostles as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ﴾

"And we have sent down to you (O Mohammad) the Book (this Quran) in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it and a criterion over it (old scriptures)" [5:48]

And he said:

﴿ شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ ﴾

"He (Allah) has ordained for you the same religion (Islam) which He ordained for Noah and that which we have inspired in you (O Mohammed) and that which we ordained for Abraham, Moses and Jesus saying you should establish religion and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects In religion)." [42:13]

These are some of the unique characteristics of the Holy Quran that are not to be found in any other Divine Scripture and it is required of a Muslim to believe in them and to practice according to them through knowledge and actions.

The Fifth Pillar
Belief in the Last Day

From the pillars of faith that a Muslim is required to have belief in and without which their faith is incomplete is to believe in the Last Day

﴿ لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ ﴾

It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and Every act of obedience to Allah, etc.) that You turn Your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes In Allah, the Last day, the angels, the Book. [2:177]

In this chapter we will explore the meaning of the Last Day and the obligation of believing in it. We will also explore the signs of the Last Day; the trial of the grave; its torment and pleasures; the Blowing of the Trumpet; the Gathering and Reckoning; the conditions of the Day of Resurrection; reckoning and recompense; the Scale; the Cistern, the Bridge; Paradise and Hell; and their descriptions and the benefit of believing in them.

Firstly: The definition of the Last Day

The Last Day is the Day of Resurrection in which Allah will cause for the resurrection of everyone from their graves for their reckoning and recompense. It is called the Last Day because there will be no day after it as the people of Paradise and Hell will be placed in their abodes eternally thereafter.

Belief in the Last Day necessitates that we believe in everything authentic that has reached us surrounding it. This includes belief in the Signs of the Last Day; death and the trials of the grave including its torment and pleasures. The blowing of the Trumpet that signifies the start of the Last Day; The Resurrection of creation from their graves; the reckoning and recompense; the spreading out of the Scroll of Deeds belonging to all creation; the preparation of the Scales to weigh the good and bad deeds of all; the Bridge that is placed over Hell which has to be passed by everyone; the believer will be saved and the unbeliever will fall into it. The Cistern of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) which the believers will drink from and quench their thirst. Paradise and all of its pleasures the pinnacle of which is to see the Face of Allah the Exalted and Hell and its torments the worst of which is to be deprived of seeing the face of Allah the Exalted.

Secondly: The numerous names for the Last Day

Allah the Exalted has given the Last Day numerous other names as stated in the Quran some of these are: The Day of Standing as it is the day when creation will stand again in front of Allah the Exalted. The Day of Resurrection as humankind will be resurrected from their graves; The Day of Sorting as all matters related to creation will be sorted out; The Day of Reckoning and many other names and descriptions that relay the greatness and importance of this day.

Thirdly: The obligation of belief in the Last Day

It is obligatory upon all Muslims to have full conviction that Allah the Exalted has fixed a day that is only known to Him in which all life in this world will come to an end and will be transferred into a different world in which the first and last of creation will gather together and receive recompense for their actions. There will be two groups – a group in Paradise and a group in the Fire.

Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ﴾

It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allah, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east or west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allah, the Last day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets. [2:177]

Moreover, belief in the Last Day is the fifth of the six pillars that were mentioned in the famous prophetic narration when the Angel Gabriel asked the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) about the tenets of faith. He replied:

"Islam is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His apostles, the Last Day, and in predestination; the good and bad aspects of it.(1)

A person's faith is not complete without full conviction in the Last Day, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴾

"O you who believe! Believe In Allah, and his Messenger (Mohammed), and the Book which He has sent down to his Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

to those before (him), and whosoever disbelieves In Allah, his angels, his Books, his Messengers, and the Last day, then indeed He has strayed far away." [4:136(

Fourthly: The Signs of the Last Hour

It is obligatory upon a Muslim to believe in the signs of the Last Hour that have been authentically reported to us by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him). The scholars have divided these into two categories and they are:

Firstly: The Minor Signs

These notify us of the coming of the Last Hour and the end of this world.

They are abundant and many of them have already taken place such as:

The loss of trust amongst people, the shortening of time, frequent natural disasters, frequent killing of people, widespread fornication and disobedience of Allah etcetera

Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ٱقۡتَرَبَتِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ وَٱنشَقَّ ٱلۡقَمَرُ﴾

"The Hour has drawn near, and the moon has been cleft asunder." [54:1]

Secondly: The Major Signs

These signs will occur immediately leading up to the Last Hour and they are ten signs none of which has occurred yet. On the authority of Hudhaifa ibn Usaid (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) came to while we were busy in a discussion. He said; "What are you discussing about?" The companions responded; "We are discussing the Last Hour." Then the Apostle of Allah said; "It will not come until you see ten signs and he mentioned: The smoke, Antichrist, the beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon them) ,the appearance of Gog and Magog, and three landslides; one in the east, one in the west and one in Arabian Peninsula; at the end a fire would burn forth from the Yemen, and would drive all people to the place of their final assembly.(1)

Fifthly: The Trials of the Grave

When the corpse of a human is placed in the grave two angels who are named Munkar and Nakeer come to it and ask three questions: "Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your prophet?" At this time, Allah makes the believers

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

firm in order to answer these questions and they reply:

"Allah is my Lord, my religion is Islam and my prophet is Mohammed".(1) As for the disbeliever or hypocrite, they will say; "Ah, ah, I do not know."(2) And in one narration they will say; "I heard the people saying something so I said the same, I do not know."(3)

It is obligatory to believe in the authentic narrations that have reached us regarding the questions of the angels in the grave, how they are asked and the response of the believers and disbelievers. This trial will be common for all mature people except for a few categories including the prophets; the martyrs, the guards in the path of Allah, those who die on Fridays or who die from stomach disease as we have learnt from authentic prophetic traditions.

Sixthly: The torment and pleasures of the grave.

It is obligatory to believe in the torment of the grave as well as its pleasures. The occupant of the grave will either find it to be a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hell. The torment or pleasure in the grave is usually experienced by both the soul and the corpse, but sometimes only the soul. The pleasures of the grave are reserved for the truthful believers and the torments for the disbelievers and sinful believers. The proof for this can be found in both what has been transmitted to us from the sources as well as what our minds experience.

Allah the Exalted has said in the Quran:

﴿وَحَاقَ بِـَٔالِ فِرۡعَوۡنَ سُوٓءُ ٱلۡعَذَابِ ٤٥ ٱلنَّارُ يُعۡرَضُونَ عَلَيۡهَا غُدُوّٗا وَعَشِيّٗاۖ وَيَوۡمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ أَدۡخِلُوٓاْ
ءَالَ فِرۡعَوۡنَ أَشَدَّ ٱلۡعَذَابِ﴾

So Allah saved him from the evils that they plotted, while an evil torment encompassed Pharaoh's people. The fire; they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon, and on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): "Cause Pharaoh's people to enter the severest torment! " [40:45-46]

Therefore, we see from this verse that Allah describes two forms of torment .The first is before the Day of Judgment and this is in the grave day and night and the second is after the Day of Judgment when they will have the severest of torments in Hell. We find in the Prophetic tradition the following narration on the

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dāwud.
(3) Transmitted by At-Tirmidhi.

authority of al-Bara ibn A'zib (may Allah be pleased with him): "When the two angels complete their questioning of a believer a caller will announce from heaven, "My servant has said the truth. Therefore, furnish him from Paradise, and dress him from Paradise, and open a door for him to Paradise." So he is given from Paradise's tranquillity and good scent, and his grave will be expanded for him as far as his sight can reach…"

As for the disbeliever, "A caller will announce from heaven, "My servant has lied, so furnish him with the Fire and open a door for him to the Fire. " He will find its heat and fierce hot wind. And his grave will be reduced in size until his rib bones crush each other.[1]

The proof for the torment and pleasure of the grave can also be found in the experience of our minds. When a person is in a state of sleep, they may see a dream that contains pleasurable things and this pleasure is experienced by the whole body. It is the same if this person were to see a nightmare and wake up in a state of fright. Both of these experiences were felt by the soul but the body also experienced the effects of these even though there was no tangible vision. In the same way, the soul and corpse will undergo these experiences in the grave.

Seventhly: The blowing of the Trumpet

The trumpet will be blown twice by the Angel Israfeel. The first time it will be blown all of creation will die except those that Allah permits to remain. Then on the second occasion all creation from the first day that the world was created until the Last Hour will be resurrected as Allah has explained in the Quran:

﴿وَنُفِخَ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخۡرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمۡ قِيَامٞ يَنظُرُونَ﴾

And the trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allah wills. Then it will blown a second time and behold, they will be standing, looking on. [39:68]

Eighthly: Resurrection and the Gathering

This will take place when the trumpet is sounded on the second occasion and all of humanity will stand in front of Allah. The souls will be returned to their bodies and everyone will be resurrected hastily from their graves and will be driven to the place wherein they will be judged and have to give an account of their deeds.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dāwud and Ahmad.

Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَنُفِخَ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأَجۡدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمۡ يَنسِلُونَ﴾

"And the trumpet will be blown (i.e. the second blowing) and behold! From the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord." [36:51]

And He said:

﴿وَحَشَرۡنَٰهُمۡ فَلَمۡ نُغَادِرۡ مِنۡهُمۡ أَحَدٗا﴾

"And we shall gather them all together so as to leave not one of them behind." [18:47]

Therefore it is obligatory upon a Muslim to believe in the resurrection as it has been proven by Divine Law.

The proof from the divine law can be found in the following verse

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمۡ فِي رَيۡبٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡبَعۡثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقۡنَٰكُم مِّن تُرَابٖ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطۡفَةٖ ثُمَّ مِنۡ عَلَقَةٖ ثُمَّ مِن
مُّضۡغَةٖ مُّخَلَّقَةٖ وَغَيۡرِ مُخَلَّقَةٖ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمۡۚ وَنُقِرُّ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡحَامِ مَا نَشَآءُ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗى ثُمَّ نُخۡرِجُكُمۡ
طِفۡلٗا ثُمَّ لِتَبۡلُغُوٓاْ أَشُدَّكُمۡۖ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرۡذَلِ ٱلۡعُمُرِ
لِكَيۡلَا يَعۡلَمَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ عِلۡمٖ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ وَتَرَى ٱلۡأَرۡضَ هَامِدَةٗ فَإِذَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهَا ٱلۡمَآءَ ٱهۡتَزَّتۡ وَرَبَتۡ
وَأَنۢبَتَتۡ مِن كُلِّ زَوۡجِۭ بَهِيجٖ ٥ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُۥ يُحۡيِ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ٦
وَأَنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٞ لَّا رَيۡبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبۡعَثُ مَن فِي ٱلۡقُبُورِ﴾

"O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, Then verily! We have created you from dust, then from a Nutfah (mixed drops of male and female sexual discharge; then from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood; then from a little lump of flesh, some formed and some unformed (miscarriage), that we may make (it) clear to you. And we cause whom we will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, Then we bring you out as infants, Then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is He who dies, and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. And you see the earth barren, but when we send down water on it, it is stirred (to life); it

swells and puts forth every lovely kind (of growth). That is because Allah, He is the truth, and it is He who gives life to the dead, and it is He who is able to do all things. And surely, the Hour is coming, there is no doubt about it, and certainly, Allah will resurrect those who are in the graves." [22:5-7]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

Then the trumpet will be blown and no one would hear that but he would bend his neck to one side and raise it from the other side… and all people will swoon then Allah would send or He would cause to send rain which would be like dew and there would grow out of it the bodies of the people. Then the trumpet will be blown a second time and they would stand up and begin to look.(1)

Allah has illustrated this to us in what we read from the lives of the previous nations as mentioned in the second chapter of Quran entitled The Cow. In it we find five examples wherein the dead where resurrected. The people of Moses who were brought back to life after death; the person who was killed by the Children of Israel; the group of people who fled from their homes in fear of death; the person who passed by a village and questioned how they could all be resurrected and the resurrection of the dead birds at the time of Abraham (peace be upon him)

Ninthly: The conditions on the Last Day

The conditions on the Last Day will be extremely over-bearing and frightening which will cause the nursing mother to forget her child and children will become gray-haired out of worry. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمۡۚ إِنَّ زَلۡزَلَةَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ شَيۡءٌ عَظِيمٞ ١ يَوۡمَ تَرَوۡنَهَا تَذۡهَلُ كُلُّ مُرۡضِعَةٍ عَمَّآ أَرۡضَعَتۡ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمۡلٍ حَمۡلَهَا وَتَرَى ٱلنَّاسَ سُكَٰرَىٰ وَمَا هُم بِسُكَٰرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ ٱللَّهِ شَدِيدٞ﴾

"O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgement) is a terrible thing. The day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her nursling, and every pregnant one will drop her load, and you shall see mankind as in a drunken state, yet they will not be drunken, but severe will be the torment of Allah." [22:1-2]

And from the severest of those conditions will be the terrifying and utter destruction of the entire world including the earth, mountains, stars, sun and moon.

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

Allah has informed us in the Quran how the earth will be shaken by a terrifying earthquake and ground to powder and the mountains will be made to pass way and become like carded wool; the seas will boil over and overflow; the skies will shake dreadfully and split asunder; and the sun will wind up and lose its light; and the moon will be eclipsed; and the stars shall lose their light and fall out of the sky.

Due to the extreme pandemonium of that day, the disbelievers will wish that they could give everything they have to finish themselves from the torment of that day as Allah the Exalted has said in the Quran:

﴿وَلَوۡ أَنَّ لِكُلِّ نَفۡسٖ ظَلَمَتۡ مَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ لَٱفۡتَدَتۡ بِهِۦۗ﴾

And if every person who had wronged (by disbelieving In Allah and by worshipping others besides Allah, possessed all that is on earth, and sought to ransom himself therewith (it will not be accepted), and they would feel In their hearts regret when they see the torment, and they will be judged with justice, and no wrong will be done unto them. [10:54]

And the condition of the disbelievers will reach such a stage that they would hope to ransom the closest people to them so that they could escape the torment of Hell as Allah has told us:

﴿يَوَدُّ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُ لَوۡ يَفۡتَدِي مِنۡ عَذَابِ يَوۡمِئِذِۭ بِبَنِيهِ ١١ وَصَٰحِبَتِهِۦ وَأَخِيهِ ١٢ وَفَصِيلَتِهِ ٱلَّتِي تُـٔۡوِيهِ ١٣ وَمَن
فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ جَمِيعٗا ثُمَّ يُنجِيهِ ١٤ كَلَّآۖ إِنَّهَا لَظَىٰ﴾

"Though they shall be made to see one another there will be none but see his father, children and relatives, but he will neither speak to them nor will ask them for any help, - The disbeliever would desire to ransom himself from the punishment of that day by his children and his wife and his brother, and his kindred who sheltered him, and all that is in the earth, so that it might save him. By no means! Verily, it will be the Fire of Hell!" (70:11-15]

It has reached us through many authentic narrations that humankind will be resurrected in a state of nakedness, barefooted and uncircumcised. They will be made to stand on a day that will be extremely long with the sun only a mile above their heads. It will be so hot that they will sweat profusely and there will be those whose sweat reaches their heels, for others their sweat will reach their loins, others whose sweat will reach their knees, and yet others whose sweat will reach and block their mouths all based on the nature of their deeds in this world.

Tenthly: The Reckoning and Reward

The ‘Reckoning and Reward’ is when all of Allah’s bondsmen will be made to stand in front of him and He will display to them their actions performed during life in this world. The process of the reckoning will include the address of Allah towards his bondsmen, their answering to him, the proofs that Allah has against them, the testimony of witnesses against them, Islamic retribution between the bondsmen, the weighing of deeds and other actions.

Allah has said:

﴿ إِنَّ إِلَيْنَآ إِيَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُم ﴾

“Verily, to us will be their return then verily for us will be their reckoning. ” [88:25-26)

﴿ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوٓا۟ ۚ أَحْصَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴾

On the day when Allah will resurrect them all together (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) and inform them of what they did. Allah has kept account of it, while they have forgotten it and Allah is witness over all things. [58:6]

The reckoning of actions will vary from person to person, so for some it will be extremely arduous and for some it will be extremely easy. For some the reckoning will be a confirmation of their actions and their reward. Some will be scolded; others will be forgiven; and yet others will need to provide a vindication for their actions. All of this will be conducted by the Most Generous, the Most Just, Allah the Exalted.

For the believers who feared Allah, they will be shown their actions and given their account so they may see the kindness of Allah upon them as He concealed their wrong actions in the world and He will forgive them in the Hereafter. As for those who disbelieved and rejected, their reckoning will be extremely arduous and meticulous encompassing every small and big deed performed. At the time of reckoning the angels will come and present the ‘Book of Deeds’ that will contain every action of Allah’s bondmen. It is a book that comprises of every small and big deed without anything amiss. Allah the Exalted has explained the scene in the following verse:

﴿ وَكُلَّ إِنسَٰنٍ أَلْزَمْنَٰهُ طَٰٓئِرَهُۥ فِى عُنُقِهِۦ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ كِتَٰبًا يَلْقَىٰهُ مَنشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ ٱقْرَأْ
كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴾

"And we have fastened every man's deeds to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection, we shall bring out for him a Book which he will find wide open. (it will be said to him): "Read Your book you are sufficient as a reckoner against yourself this Day." [17:13-14]

Of the bondsmen of Allah, some will be given their book in their right hand and there will be others who will be given their book in their left hand or behind their backs as Allah has stated:

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَنۡ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ٧ فَسَوۡفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابٗا يَسِيرٗا ٨ وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِۦ مَسۡرُورٗا
٩ وَأَمَّا مَنۡ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ وَرَآءَ ظَهۡرِهِۦ ١٠ فَسَوۡفَ يَدۡعُواْ ثُبُورٗا ١١ وَيَصۡلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ﴾

Then, as for him who will be given his record in his right hand. He surely will receive an easy Reckoning and will return to his family In joy, but whosoever is given his record behind his back, he will invoke (His) destruction, and shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning. [84:7-12]

It has been stated in authentic prophetic traditions that the first nation to receive their reckoning will be the nation of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and the first thing that will be reckoned from the rights of Allah will be al-Salah (five daily prayers) and the first thing to be judged for between people will be the spilling of blood. Islamic retribution will also be carried out between the bondsmen of Allah so that the oppressed will take their rights from their oppressors.

Eleventh: The Scale of Deeds

The scale of deeds will be used on the Day of Judgment to weigh the deeds of Allah's bondsmen. It is a physical scale has two pans and a tongue. It will be used to weigh all deeds with the good deeds in one pan and the bad deeds in the opposite pan.

Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ وَنَضَعُ ٱلْمَوَٰزِينَ ٱلْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَٰسِبِينَ ﴾

And we shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, we will bring it. And Sufficient are we as Reckoners. [21:47]

And Allah also says:

﴿ وَٱلْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ ﴾

And the weighing on that Day (Day of Resurrection) will be the true (weighing). So as for those whose scale (of good deeds) will be heavy, they will be the successful (by entering Paradise). And as for those whose scale will be light, they are those who will lose their own selves (by entering Hell) because they denied and rejected Our Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.).[7:8-9]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Purification is half of faith and saying Alhamdulillah fills the scales."(1)

Twelfth: The Cistern

This is the cistern of water the source of which is the River of Kauthar. It is situated at the place of reckoning before people cross the Bridge into Paradise.

Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنَٰكَ ٱلْكَوْثَرَ ﴾

"Verily, we have granted You (O Mohammed) Al-Kauthar (a river In Paradise)" [108:1]

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"My Cistern is the distance (size) of a month's (journey). Its water is whiter than milk and its scent is better than musk. Its drinking vessels are like the stars of the sky and whoever drinks from it will never feel thirst again." (2)

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

This cistern is one of the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon his slave and Apostle Mohammed (peace be upon him) on that day. The believers will be hosted at it by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and will drink from it, however those who renegaded from the religion of Allah or who innovated affairs that are disliked by Allah, will not be able to drink from it. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"I will be waiting for you at the Cistern and some men will come towards me and I will attempt to pass (water) to them, but a barrier will come between us and I will say 'O' Allah my companions." And it will be said; "You do not know what they did after you were gone."[1]

Thirteenth: The Bridge

It is a bridge that lies of the Fire of Hell and all people must pass it in order to reach Paradise. All the Exalted said:

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَّنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴾

"There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with Your Lord; a decree which must be accomplished. Then we shall save those who use to fear Allah and were dutiful to Him. And we shall leave the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) therein (humbled) to their knees (in Hell)." [19:71-72]

The scholars have said the above verse is describing how the believers will pass over over the bridge, but the disbelievers will enter the Fire immediately.

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

Then a bridge will be laid over Hell." I shall be the first amongst the Apostles to cross it with my followers. Nobody except the Apostles will then be able to speak and they will be saying; 'O Allah! Save us. O Allah Save us.' and over that bridge there will be hooks similar to the thorns of As Sa'dan (a thorny tree) but no one knows their size except Allah and these will entangle the people according to their deeds; some of them will be ruined because of their evil deeds, and some will be scratched, but saved[2]

The bridge has been described in the following ways. It is sharper than a sword and finer than a hair not allowing the foot of any person to be stable upon it except by the permission of Allah. The believers will pass on it at varying speeds

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

depending on their good deeds. Some of them will pass at the blink of an eye; some will pass at the speed of lighting, some at the speed of wind, some at the speed of a bird, some at the speed of the fastest horse, some at the speed of a human's jogging pace and the last by being dragged.

Fourteenth: al-Qantara between Paradise and Hell

It is a stage between Paradise and Hell that the believers who have crossed the Bridge over Hell will be stopped at so that mutual retaliation can be established between them before they enter Paradise. After they have been cleansed and purified of anything wrongful done to each other they will be allowed to enter paradise.

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The believers, after being saved from Hell, will be stopped at a bridge between Paradise and Hell and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding the wrongful actions that were committed against each other in the world. After they are cleansed and purified through the retaliation process, they will be admitted into Paradise. And by Him in whose Hand Mohammed's soul is, every one of them will know his dwelling in Paradise better than he knew his dwelling in this world."

Fifteenth: Paradise and its description

Paradise is the abode of delight that Allah the Exalted has prepared for all believers. Allah has said:

﴿ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ ﴾

"And those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah and his Messengers and whatever they brought) and did righteous deeds, will be made to enter Gardens under which rivers flow, - to Dwell therein forever (i.e. in Paradise), with the permission of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be: Salam (peace)" [14:23]

The description of Paradise as explained in the Quran and the Prophetic tradition is detailed and some of the delights will be:

Flowing rivers and lofty rooms, with beautiful spouses and whatever the self desires, such that no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no mind has ever comprehended; the beautiful scent of which can be smelt from a distance of forty years. The greatest of all delights will be the sight of one's Lord with their own eyes.

Paradise will have one hundred degrees and the length between each of these degrees is as the length between the earth and the sky and the highest degree is called al-Firdous, the roof of which touches the Throne of Allah. It has eight doors and the distance between each door is more than one thousand kilometres. The minimum degree in Paradise is like this world and ten times more.

Paradise has been created and it exists now. Allah has prepared it for his pious bondsmen who fear him as he has stated in the Quran:

﴿وَسَارِعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرۡضُهَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ أُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ﴾

"Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous." [3:133]

The delights of Paradise do not come to an end or run out, rather they are eternal and without discontinuity, its inhabitants will remain within it eternally as Allah has said;

﴿جَزَآؤُهُمۡ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدٗاۖ رَّضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنۡهُمۡ وَرَضُواْ عَنۡهُۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنۡ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُۥ﴾

Their reward with their Lord is 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (Gardens of Eternity), underneath which rivers flow, they will abide therein forever, Allah well-pleased with them, and they with Him. that is for Him who fears his Lord. [98:8]

Sixteenth: Hell and its description

Hell is the abode of chastisement that Allah has prepared in the Hereafter for all disbelievers and disobedient people. Allah has said:

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ حَقَّتۡ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَنَّهُمۡ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ﴾

Thus has the word of Your Lord been justified against those who disbelieved, that they will be the dwellers of the Fire. [40:6]

The description of Hell as explained in the Quran and the Prophetic tradition is detailed and the chastisements have been described as the worst forms that one can imagine. Its fuel is human flesh and stones, its food will be thorny plants and it drink will be boiling festering water. The intensity of the fire in Hell will be more than seventy times more severe than the intensity of the fire in this world. It has many different grades that vary in chastisement and they are accessed by seven doors. For each door is an allotted number who are supervised by angels that are

stern and severe. Hell never becomes tired or bored of the numbers of people that are thrown in to it, rather it calls out, “Are there any more to come?”

Hell has been created by Allah and it exists now. Allah has prepared it for the disbelievers and it is an eternal abode of chastisement that never ceases. The disbelievers will remain in it eternally and will never be allowed to leave as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَعَنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ۝٦٤ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ لَّا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴾

Verily, Allah has cursed the disbelievers, and has prepared for them a flaming Fire (Hell). Wherein they will abide for ever, and they will find neither a Walî (a Protector) nor a helper.[33:64-65]

As for those who disobeyed Allah, but had faith, they will be punished in Hell until they have been cleansed of their sins and then Allah the Most Merciful will admit them into Paradise. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“Allah will admit into Paradise those deserving of Paradise and He will admit whom He wishes out of His mercy, and admit those condemned to Hell into the Fire. He would then say: “See, he whom you find having as much faith in his heart as a grain of mustard, bring him out. They will then be brought out burned and turned to charcoal, and would be cast into the river of life, and they would sprout as does a seed in the silt carried away by flood.”(1)

Seventeenth: The benefits of believing in the Last Day

There are many great benefits for those who believe in the Last day some of these are:

a) Belief in the Last Day brings tranquillity to the heart of believer because they believes that this worldly life is ephemeral and that the Hereafter is the final abode where one will experience eternal happiness or wretchedness.

b) It makes the believer compete and strive hard in doing good deeds and to abstain from doing evil deeds because they believe that all actions will be reckoned for in front of Allah the Exalted.

c) It brings the believer consolation for whatever they miss from the pleasures of this world, because they remain hopeful for the pleasures and rewards of the Hereafter.

d) Belief in the Last Day is the foundation for making both the individual and society upright. When a human being believes that Allah will resurrect creation

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

after their death making them reckon for their actions, rewarding them for their deeds; bringing to justice those who have oppressed and returning the rights back to those who have been oppressed, then they will become steadfast in obeying Allah and refrain from evil; therefore creating security and goodness for the whole of society.

e) Having knowledge in the fairness of Allah, His virtue, and His sagacity; as He recompenses those deserving reward with His blessings and those deserving His chastisement with His justice.

The Sixth Pillar
Faith in the Decree

Faith in the Decree is the sixth pillar among the pillars of faith which are obligated upon the Muslim to believe, and one's faith is not sound without it due to what is affirmed in the narration of the angel Jibreel (peace be upon him) when he asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about faith. So the Prophet said:

'It is that you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, the Last Day, and that you believe in the Decree, its good and its evil'.(1)

Faith in the Decree is the required belief that Allah the Exalted, Creator of everything, is one's Lord and Sovereign, who has decreed the destiny of created beings before He created them; He decreed their lifespan, provisions, deeds, and what they would be whether happy or miserable, and He wrote that with Him in the Preserved Tablet. Thus every good or evil is by the decision and decree of Allah. There is nothing in this existence except it is through His knowledge and decree, and nothing is outside of His will and assessment.

Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَٰهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴾

"Verily, We have created all things with Qadar." [54:49]

And Allah the Glorified said:

﴿ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ فِي كِتَٰبٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴾

"Know you not that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Verily, it is (all) in the Book (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz). Verily! That is easy for Allah." [22:70]

Thus Allah the Sublime and Lofty knows what is, what will be, what will not be, and even if it was, how it would be, and whatever Allah wills of something, it is, and whatever He does not will, cannot be.

And Allah the Exalted is the Creator of the slaves, and the Creator of their actions, just as He the Exalted said:

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

"While Allah has created you and what you make!" [37:96]

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(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

And slaves are the doers of their actions in reality since Allah the Lofty and Sublime provided them with will and ability over their actions; and the will and ability of the slave both happen by the will and power of Allah the Exalted according to His statement:

﴿لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمۡ أَن يَسۡتَقِيمَ ٢٨ وَمَا تَشَآءُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ﴾

"To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight, and you will not, unless (it be) that Allah wills, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists)." [81:28-29]

What is obligated upon the Muslim is faith in all of the Decree- its good and its evil, its sweet and its bitter- and have faith that it is from Allah the Exalted. And when good befalls him, then what is obligated upon him is that he praise Allah the Glorified and thank Him for His good discretion and what He bestowed upon him of His favour and benevolence. For Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعۡمَةٖ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ﴾

"And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah." [16:53]

The right due on the blessing and favour of Allah the Glorified is that the slave thanks Him with his tongue and that he employs and makes use of it in obeying Allah Lofty is His Sublimity, just as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ٱعۡمَلُوٓاْ ءَالَ دَاوُۥدَ شُكۡرٗا﴾

"Work you, O family of Dawud (David), with thanks!" [34:13]

In other words, work performed with gratitude.

Just as one should learn about the effect of this blessing, displaying blessings and speaking about them is one of the ways of being thankful for them, as Allah the Lofty and Sublime said:

﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعۡمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثۡ﴾

"And proclaim the Grace of your Lord (i.e. the prophethood and all other Graces)." [93:11]

As for when something the slave dislikes befalls him whereof Allah the Exalted decreed it, then indeed what is obligatory upon him are several matters:

1) that he be patient upon what is destined, not worry or despair, and know that

what has befallen him could not miss him, and whatever misses him could not befall him, just as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'Truly you will never find a true taste of faith until you know that whatever befalls you could not miss you, and whatever misses you, could not befall you'.(1)

2) that he be pleased with and surrender to the Decree since that is from the completeness of faith in Allah's Lordship, and that His action and judgment are all good, just, and wise.

When the Muslim realises that, he will find tranquillity and peace of mind for whatever happens to him of the Decree of Allah the Exalted. So he does not despair at the passing of a loved one or an unpleasant event, rather he praises Allah the Exalted and thanks Him in every circumstance since he knows that all what happens to him is by the Decree of Allah to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and it is unavoidable. Regarding that, Allah the Sublime and Exalted says:

﴿ مَآ أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِيٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَٰبٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَآۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْاْ عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُواْ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴾

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz), before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah. In order that you may not be sad over matters that you fail to get, nor rejoice because of that which has been given to you. And Allah likes not prideful boasters."[57:22-23]

And the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'How astonishing is the affair of the believer. Indeed his entire affair is good, and that is not the case for anyone except the believer. If good days befall him, he gives thanks, thus it is good for him. And if adversity strikes him, he is patient, thus it is good for him'.(2)

3) that he makes use of the means of what is allocated to him against what he dislikes of fate since Allah the Exalted made for this fate a means to repel and remove it, whether with supplication, charity, medicine, and other ways.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

Making use of the means does not negate faith in the Decree, in entrusting affairs and reliance upon Allah regarding the obtainment of good and warding off evil, rather that is from the completeness of entrusting affairs to Him the Glorified, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) guided towards this with his statement:

‘Be persistent in what will benefit you, ask Allah for help, and do not despair. And if something befalls you, then do not say: “If I had done such-and-such…” Rather say: “It is the Decree of Allah and He does whatever He wills”. For indeed saying ‘if’ unleashes the work of Satan’.[1]

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

Transgressions Warned About in Islam

Firstly: Magic

1) The definition

It consists of blowing on tied knots, polytheistic incantations, unintelligible speech or writings of a magician, or something done indirectly to the victim of magic affecting his body, heart or mind.

What they call ‘prestidigitation’ is also a part of magic. It is the slight-of-hand where one sees something and thinks that it is real however it is not.

2) Aspects of magic

Magic is divided into two parts: A) tricks, sleight of hand, illusion and things which are not real, or which are real however people cannot grasp unless the situation is disclosed to them; and B) magic which is real, exists, and has an effect on the body, thus it provokes the affliction of sickness and harm in the victim of magic.

3) The ruling on performing and studying magic

Magic is among the actions which Islam prohibits, and indeed all revealed laws prohibited it, and it is among those things which invalidate a person’s claim to Islam. It is among the great major sins, and its prohibition has been stipulated by the Quran, Prophetic traditions, and by consensus of the Muslims. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا۟ كَيْدُ سَٰحِرٍ ۖ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلسَّاحِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ﴾

“That which they have made is only a magician's trick, and the magician will never be successful, no matter whatever amount (of skill) he may attain. ” [20:69]

And Allah the Glorified said:

﴿وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ ٱلسِّحْرَ﴾

“…but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic.”[2:102]

On authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

‘Keep away from the seven mortal sins’. The Companions said: ‘Oh messenger of Allah, what are they?!’ He said: ‘Polytheism, magic…’ to the end of the narration.(1)

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) declared magic to be from among the major sins which are required to keep away from and whose practice is prohibited.

Based on this we know that studying magic is prohibited and it is one of the doors which lead to disbelief and joining partners with Allah the Exalted. Magic would not be like that unless one did certain matters by which he disbelieved, like establishing relationships with Jinn and demons and seeking their assistance.

Predominantly magic is not used except in afflicting others with harm and causing discomfort, and Allah the Exalted has called attention to that by saying:

﴿ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِۦ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِۦۚ وَمَا هُم بِضَآرِّينَ بِهِۦ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ ﴾

"And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not."[2:102]

Slight-of-hand and tricks are a type of magic that fall under the prohibition since it is a type of magic. The Prophet of Allah Musa (peace be upon him) censured the magicians of Pharaoh and described them as 'criminals', as Allah the Glorified said:

﴿ فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا۟ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ مَا جِئْتُم بِهِ ٱلسِّحْرُۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَيُبْطِلُهُۥٓۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴾

"Then when they had cast down, Moses (Musa) said: "What you have brought is sorcery; Allah will surely make it of no effect. Verily, Allah does not set right the work of Al-Mufsidun (the evil-doers, corrupts, etc.)."[10:81]

Considering that what they brought was deceptions and illusions, Allah said:

﴿ فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ وَعِصِيُّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِن سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَىٰ ﴾

"[Moses] said: "Nay, throw you (first)!" Then behold, their ropes and their sticks, by their magic, appeared to him as though they moved fast."[20:66]

Even if it was not magic in reality, it had a resemblance to the performance of magic, and it left an effect in the minds and hearts of onlookers due to the artifice and slight-of-hand.

4) The ruling of going to magicians

People go to magicians for one of two reasons:

a) To request from a magician a cure for a sick person; or

b) To work magic for the purpose of afflicting harm on someone, to get close to an object of affection, or to investigate about something lost.

No matter the reason, going to magicians is prohibited in the religion of Allah due to what was transmitted from Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him):

'Whoever goes to a fortune teller, magician, or soothsayer and believes what he says, then he has disbelieved in what has been sent down to Mohammed (peace be upon him)'.[1]

And it was transmitted on authority of Imran ibn Husayn that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'He who tells fortunes, has his fortune told, reads auguries or has his augury read is not from us' and I think he said: '…performs magic or has magic performed for him'.[2]

And it was transmitted on authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him): 'The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about incantations and he said:

'It is from the work of Satan'.[3]

Al-Hasan said: 'Incantations are part of magic, and what it means here is to undo magic with magic'.

Besides being clearly prohibited, people going to a magician for the aforementioned purposes contains an element of attaching to others besides Allah that which is in His Hands of the ability to benefit and harm; there is also an element of approval of the magician for his work and what he practices of disbelief, and this is not suitable coming from a Muslim who believes in Allah the Exalted.

Secondly: Soothsayers and Fortune Tellers

1) The definitions:

Soothsaying is reporting about unseen matters whether about the past or the future, by means of mixing with Jinn. The one who does that is called a 'soothsayer'.

Fortune telling is the claim to knowledge of the unseen by means of lines in the ground, reading palms, and other methods, and whoever does that is called a 'fortune teller'.

Astrology is the claim of being able to read the movement of the stars and that it has an effect on the world below. The astrologer is the one who studies the stars and planets claiming that they have an effect on worldly events from the rains to the wind, hot and cold, good and evil, and happiness and misery.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Yala.
(2) Transmitted by At-Tabarani.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

2) The ruling on soothsaying and fortune telling

Soothsaying and fortune telling are prohibited in the religion of Allah the Exalted they are from the major sins, and are doors that lead to disbelief in Allah the Exalted. So it is not permissible for a Muslim to learn soothsaying and fortune telling, to practice them, or to go to people who practice them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) declared the gravity of these actions on the belief of people and their righteous deeds. It was transmitted on authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Whoever goes to a soothsayer or fortune teller and believes him in what he says, then he has disbelieved in what has been sent down to Mohammed (peace be upon him)'.[1] It was transmitted on authority of Safiyah from some of the wives of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he Prophet said: 'Whoever goes to the fortune teller and asks him about something, his prayer is not accepted for forty nights'.[2] And on authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

'Whoever learns about the stars has learned a branch of magic, as he increases in one, he increases in the other'.[3]

This is a severe threat for whoever goes to the fortune tellers and soothsayers and a clear proof indicating the gravity of this sin; and that is due to the following:

a) Soothsaying, fortune telling and astrology are types of magic;

b) Soothsaying, fortune telling and astrology are claims to knowledge of the unseen which no one knows except Allah the Glorified and Exalted;

c) Soothsaying, fortune telling and astrology open the doors to deception, fraud and attachment to others beside Allah the Lofty and Sublime.

3) Actions and methods involved in soothsaying and fortune telling

A great number of matters fall under soothsaying and fortune telling, among them are:

a) Conjuring spirits: The claim to be able to summon spirits of the dead, consult them, ask them about problems, seek their help in curing sickness, and disclose unseen matters, and predict the future.

b) Reading palms, cups and cards (tarot): The claim to have knowledge of the characteristics and future of a person during the course of looking at the lines of his palm, from patterns in the leftovers of the coffee in the wall of the cup, or from looking at Tarot cards.

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(1) Transmitted by Ahmad and al-Hakim
(2) Transmitted by Muslim
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Majah

c) Casting shells: The use of shells (oysters) by stirring them in a random manner in order to know one's fate and future.

d) Writing in sand: The claim to know the future of a person during the course of reading what an astrologer draws with lines in the sand.

e) Reading the zodiac: The claim to know the characteristics of people and their future based on a Zodiacal sign which is associated with the individual.

There is no doubt that these methods and actions, all of them, are involved in soothsaying, fortune telling, astrology and the claim to know the Unseen which no one knows except Allah the Glorified and Exalted.

Whoever comes with a single one of them has entered into legal danger and the Prophetic threat, so it is not permissible to learn these things, go to those who work with them, or believe in what they report through it, even if there is agreement between what they say and what occurs since these things only occur by the discretion of Allah the Glorified and Exalted. As for them, then the Prophet (peace be upon him) has informed us that they report events their servants among the Jinn deliver to them and they tell a hundred lies on top of it. So those who are ignorant of their condition think that events take place just like they reported, and they do not consider all the lies in their words. It was transmitted on authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'When Allah decrees a matter in heaven, the angels beat their wings in submission to His statement just like chains on rocks, in that case:

﴿فُزِّعَ عَن قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا۟ مَاذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ ٱلْحَقَّ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْكَبِيرُ﴾

"Until when fear is banished from their (angels') hearts, they (angels) say: 'What is it that your Lord has said?' They say: 'The truth. And He is the Most High, the Most Great'." [34:23]

So the jinn listen to it stealing an audience, and stealing a listen such that some are on top of others' - and Sufyan described them with his hands, so he unfolded them and interlocked his fingers- 'thus they listen to the speech then delivers it to whoever is below him; then the other one delivers to whoever is below him until it is delivered onto the tongue of the magician or soothsayer. Perhaps a meteor catches one before he delivers it and perhaps he delivers it before the meteor catches him. Then he tells along with it a hundred lies, thus it is said: 'Did he not say to us today such and such, so on and so forth?!' So that speech which was heard in heaven turns out to be true'.[1]

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī.

Thirdly: Amulets and Charms

Among the matters which Islam warns about and prohibits its followers from - considering its significance on their belief and monotheism - is the hanging of amulets, incantations and charms and believing that they can deter what they fear will cause harm or bring about what will benefit them.

1) The definition of amulets:

Amulets are anything that is hung on people, animals, or riding beasts whether beads, fabric, bone, yarn, shell, or anything resembling that, in order to repel the Evil Eye and misfortune or to bring about good and something beneficial.

2) The ruling on hanging amulets

Hanging amulets is from among the actions which Islam has prohibited since it is from the actions of the polytheists in the time of ignorance. And the Prophet (peace be upon him) has given a grave warning about it and declared that it is from the means of falling into polytheism. It was transmitted on authority of Ibn Masud that he heard the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying:

'Truly incantations, amulets, and spells are polytheism'.(1)

Uqbah ibn Amir transmitted that: 'A group came to the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and nine of them gave him the oath of allegiance while he kept away from one of them. So they said: 'Oh messenger of Allah! Why did you take the oath of allegiance from nine and leave this one?' He said: **'He has an amulet on him'**. So he took his hand and cut it off, then that one gave him the oath of allegiance. The Prophet said:

'Whoever hangs an amulet then he has committed polytheism'.(2)

Thus when people believe that amulets benefit and harm in themselves without Allah the Exalted then this is major polytheism that removes one from the religion - and refuge is in Allah - and if one believes that they are instruments that Allah put in place to repel evil, the Evil Eye, and Jinn, then this is a part of minor polytheism since Allah has not made them an instrument for that.

3) The forms of prohibited amulets

Prohibited amulets has several shapes and appearances, some of them are inherited from ancient times and others are newly invented however the purpose of all of them is singular- to repel afflictions and bring out advantages. They do not differ in terms of their being ruled as prohibited, and among their forms and appearances are:

Spells: Anything a wife uses on her husband with the claim that it will make both of them love each other.

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Ibn Majah.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Yala and al-Hakim.

Among that type are also horseshoes - small shoes, lucky beads, pictures of eyes and palms - hanging from yarn or a piece of fabric on the hands or around the neck; hanging a particular type of shell (sea shell), or pieces of paper which contain a code or charm.

Fourthly: Superstitions and Evil Omens

Among the matters which Islam warns about and commands distance from due to the effect it has on the purity of faith and monotheism are superstitions and evil omens.

1) The definition of superstition:

It is when people see an evil omen in what will come to pass because of something they saw or heard like seeing an evil omen in the sound of crows or the sight of an owl.

2) Forms of superstitions and evil omens:

Several forms of superstitions and evil omens exist among people such as seeing one-eyed individuals, crows and owls, black cats, events taking place, a particular month or day, a specific number, eye disorders, and other things.

3) The ruling on superstitions:

Superstitions are among the matters which Islam has prohibited due to the effect it has in weakening certainty of faith and the lack of having confidence in the judgment of Allah and His decree, rather the Prophet (peace be upon him) considered it as a type of polytheism. It was transmitted on authority of Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'Evil omens are polytheism, evil omens are polytheism, evil omens are polytheism'.[1]

It was also transmitted on authority of Abdullah ibn Amr (may Allah be pleased with him), the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

'Whoever is turned back from some need by an evil omen, then he has committed polytheism'.[2]

Superstition is determined to be an act of polytheism only because people believe that these matters which they are superstitious about are what bring some advantage or repel some harm, thus it is as if they have made it a partner with Allah, and this prevents what is necessary for a Muslim of believing that it is in the Hands of Allah alone. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَإِن يَمْسَسْكَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُۥٓ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَإِن يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَآدَّ لِفَضْلِهِۦ ﴾

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad.

"And if Allah touches you with hurt, there is none who can remove it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His Favour."[10:107]

Just as superstition prevents the worship of relying upon Allah the Glorified and Exalted and unlocks for people the door of fear and attachment to others beside Allah.

4) The remedy for superstition and evil omens

A little superstition befalls the heart of people so worry and confusion afflicts them on account of people informing them of their superstitions. And this only enters the heart because of the whispers of Satan, and a weakness of reliance upon Allah. Here is where we find how the Prophet (peace be upon him) remedied this matter. It was transmitted on authority of Abdullah ibn Amr (may Allah be pleased with him), the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

'Whoever is repelled from some need by superstition, then he has committed polytheism'. The Companions said: 'Oh messenger of Allah! What is the expiation for that?' He said: **'One of them should say: "Oh Allah, there is no good except Your good, and no omen except Your omen, and there is no god other than You".'**[1]

Just as this grief of the heart results from superstition, before long it leaves the heart, however it is possible to remove it with reliance on Allah, just as Ibn Masud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: 'There is no one except something befalls him and Allah removes it with trust in Him'.[2]

Fifthly: Supplicating to Someone Besides Allah

Supplication is a worship which has a great status in the religion of Allah since it is a connection between the slave and his Lord Lofty is His Sublimity. Allah the Lofty and Sublime said:

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِى وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِى لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴾

"And when My slaves ask you (O Mohammed SAW) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright."[2:186]

Considering this great status, the Prophet (peace be upon him) made it the most important type of worship, for he said:

'Supplication is worship'.[3]

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.
(3) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah.

1) Supplication is the epitome of monotheism

Upon reflecting on the worship of supplication one perceives that it encompasses the three categories of monotheism, thus the slave realizes the Oneness of Allah's Lordship through supplication since he does not turn except to Allah because He fulfills his needs and repels his suffering due to his recognizing that He the Glorified is the one capable of everything and it is He who has in His Hands the management of all matters.

It is through supplication the Oneness of Divinity is realized since it is through sincerely supplicating to Allah that one declares his shortcomings and deficiency in front of his Lord the Glorified and Exalted he declares that he is seeking refuge in Him and placing his trust in Him, returning to Him and putting Him in charge, out of awe of Him and longing for Him, out of fear of His punishment and desirous of His reward.

It is through supplication the Oneness of Allah's names and attributes is realized since at the time one turns to Allah with supplication before he asks of Him something he praises Allah with His names and attributes which befit Him, Lofty is His Sublimity, and blessed be His names.

2) Supplicating others besides Allah the Glorified and Exalted

Allah the Glorified and Exalted commanded all of His slaves to be sincere in their supplication and to not associate any partners from the creation with Him in supplication, regardless of whether they claim to be an angel near to Allah, a Prophet sent by Him, or a righteous slave. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ فَٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ﴾

"…so invoke Him making your worship pure for Him Alone (by worshipping Him Alone, and none else, and by doing righteous deeds sincerely for Allah's sake only, and not to show off, and not to set up rivals with Him in worship)."[40:65]

Allah the Glorified clarifies that whoever turns in supplication to someone else, he falls into the greatest misguidance and in his actions is the same as the early people of ignorance from the polytheists. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدْعُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُۥٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ وَهُمْ عَن دُعَآئِهِمْ غَـٰفِلُونَ ﴾

"And who is more astray than one who calls (invokes) besides Allah, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them?"[46:5]

And Allah Lofty is His Sublimity said:

﴿ وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَـٰهًا ءَاخَرَ لَا بُرْهَـٰنَ لَهُۥ بِهِۦ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلْكَـٰفِرُونَ ﴾

"And whoever invokes (or worships), besides Allah, any other ilah (god), of whom he has no proof, then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely! Al-Kafirun (the disbelievers in Allah and in the Oneness of Allah, polytheists, pagans, idolaters, etc.) will not be successful."[23:117]

It was also transmitted on authority of Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him), the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

'Whoever dies while calling on a partner beside Allah, he will enter the Fire'.[1]

From here we know that directing requests and supplications to the creation and seeking their help in what only Allah the Glorified and Exalted is capable of, the one who does this falls into major polytheism which removes a person from the religion of Islam, rendering fruitless all actions, obligating eternity in the Hell-Fire for its doer, and refuge from that is sought in Allah.

As for when a person requests from the creation something it is capable of, and this created thing is alive and not dead, present and not absent, then truly there is no harm in requesting things from them and seeking help from them.

For indeed if one of these conditions was confused, the slave would displace one of the acts of worship to something other than Allah the Exalted.

Consider my fellow Muslim how Allah the Exalted negates supplicating to the creation and seeking their help by declaring their weakness and inability to respond to the one who supplicates to them, as He the Exalted said:

﴿ قُلِ ٱدۡعُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمۡتُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ فَلَا يَمۡلِكُونَ كَشۡفَ ٱلضُّرِّ عَنكُمۡ وَلَا تَحۡوِيلًا ﴾

"Say (O Mohammed SAW): 'Call unto those besides Him whom you pretend. They have neither the power to remove the adversity from you nor even to shift it from you to another person'."[17:56]

He Lofty is His Sublimity also said:

﴿ قُلۡ أَرَءَيۡتُم مَّا تَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَمۡ لَهُمۡ شِرۡكٞ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِۖ ٱئۡتُونِي بِكِتَٰبٖ مِّن قَبۡلِ هَٰذَآ
أَوۡ أَثَٰرَةٖ مِّنۡ عِلۡمٍ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ٤ وَمَنۡ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدۡعُواْ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسۡتَجِيبُ لَهُۥٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ
ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ وَهُمۡ عَن دُعَآئِهِمۡ غَٰفِلُونَ ٥ وَإِذَا حُشِرَ ٱلنَّاسُ كَانُواْ لَهُمۡ أَعۡدَآءٗ وَكَانُواْ بِعِبَادَتِهِمۡ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

"Say (O Mohammed SAW to these pagans): 'Think! All that you invoke besides Allah show me! What have they created of the earth? Or have they a share in (the creation of) the heavens?

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī

Bring me a Book (revealed before this), or some trace of knowledge (in support of your claims), if you are truthful!' And who is more astray than one who calls (invokes) besides Allah, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them? And when mankind are gathered (on the Day of Resurrection), they (false deities) will become enemies for them and will deny their worshipping."[46:4-6]

Thus this is a conclusive, decisive declaration that one should not address anything from the creation other than Allah the Exalted with supplication since they are incapable of benefitting or harming anyone. They do not share with Allah the Glorified and Exalted in His creation besides create anything independently. So from what perspective and by what right does the creation address them with supplication?!

Sixthly: Seeking Blessings Through Relics

1) The definition of 'seeking blessing':

The word for 'seeking blessing' in Arabic is taken from the word 'blessing' itself which means 'a great amount of something which has goodness' and 'stability and inclusion in it'. So 'to seek blessings' is to request the greater good and to request stability and inclusion in it.

2) Types of seeking blessing

Goodness and blessing are two matters that are in the Hands of Allah the Lofty and Sublime, while some matters are specific to them. So that makes favour and blessing a part of it as well, and these matters are divided into several categories, among them are:

a) Seeking of blessings with words like through the recitation of the Noble Quran, the names and attributes of Allah, supplications, and remembrances transmitted on authority of the Prophet (peace be upon him). And that is through the slave persisting in remembering Allah, glorifying Him, praising Him through His names and attributes, being eager to recite the Quran with its due right, and acting upon its rulings all while seeking the blessing of the reward and recompense, tranquillity of the heart, forgiveness for sins, and intercession on the Day of Judgment. Seeking blessings from the Quran and the names and attributes of Allah is not through decorating homes, the walls of the residences, and places of honour in councils.

b) Seeking blessings through places like Makkah and its Holy Mosque, Medina and its Mosque, the Jerusalem Mosque, the Mosque of Quba, and the rest of the houses of Allah; and that is because Allah has distinguished these places by increasing them in favour and a great reward for good actions done in them.

c) Seeking blessings through timings like in the month of Ramadan, the Night of the Decree, the first ten days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah, Fridays, and the last third of the night.

The slave pursues acts of worship and increases in obedience during favourable and blessed times and places in order for him to achieve an abundant reward, great recompense, a compounding of good deeds, and an elevation in status resulting from performing these acts of obedience.

d) Seeking blessings through things like with Zamzam water, rain water and olive trees. The blessing in them takes place from the direction of Allah the Exalted making some of them a means for intercession, the attainment of goodness and benefit, the germination of crops, giving life to the dead earth, and an object of the response to supplication.

e) Seeking blessings through actions like righteous deeds.

f) Seeking blessings through individuals like the Prophets (peace be upon them) and righteous slaves of Allah during their lifetime through following their guidance and supporting them. Thus a worldly and spiritual benefit is achieved by the Muslim.

3) The ruling on the prohibited forms of seeking blessings

Seeking blessings is a restrictive matter which is necessary for the Muslim to support its performance with legal proof from the Quran and Prophetic tradition, and it is not permissible to invent anything in it without evidence and legal support, otherwise it becomes a prohibited, unlegislated form of seeking blessings.

Prohibited forms of seeking blessings are among the most serious matters pertaining to faith and among the greatest means of disgrace in monotheism since one who believes blessings reside in a specific form of trees or stones, some graves, some regions, a specific form of dirt, in some mountains, caves and caverns, without legal support, and who deems lawful rubibng them or taking something from their remains, falls into polytheism- and refuge is sought in Allah from that.

On authority of Abu Waqid al-Laythi, he said: 'We went out with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and we were just recently acquainted with disbelief - they had just accepted Islam on the day of the conquest of Makkah - so we ended up at a tree that the polytheists used to hang their weapons from which would remain on it through the year; it was called 'the Possessor of Hangings'. So we said: 'Make a 'possessor of hangings' for us'. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'Allah is great, you are saying the same thing the people of Musa said:

﴿ٱجۡعَل لَّنَآ إِلَٰهٗا كَمَا لَهُمۡ ءَالِهَةٞ﴾

"Make for us an Ilahan (a god) as they have Aliha (gods)."[7:138]

Then the Prophet said:

'Indeed you will climb onto the traditions of those were before you'.[1]

Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) compared their request of taking a tree and seeking blessings through it, hanging weapons from it, and standing around it with what the children of Israel requested of taking a god alongside Allah, even though they did not worship it or call upon it.

On authority of Nafi, it reached Umar that there was a people who would go to a tree - meaning the tree of Rudwan - and they would pray near it. So he admonished them then commanded for it to be cut down, thus it was cut down.[2]

On authority of al-Marur ibn Suwayd: 'We went along with Umar during a Hajj that he performed, and he recited with us in the morning prayer:

﴿أَلَمۡ تَرَ كَيۡفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصۡحَٰبِ ٱلۡفِيلِ﴾

And:

﴿لِإِيلَٰفِ قُرَيۡشٍ﴾

So when he finished his Hajj and returned, people were rushing, so he said: 'What is this?' They said: 'It is a Mosque that the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) prayed in'. So he said: 'Just like this the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) were destroyed, taking the footsteps of their Prophets as churches. He among you who is in it when the prayer time falls, then let him pray, and he among you who is in it and the prayer time has fallen, then he should not pray'.[3]

Thus whoever believes that these matters harm or benefit, or that they bestow or prevent blessings or goodness, then this is from major polytheism that removes one from the religion. As for someone who does that in the hope of blessings from Allah by seeking blessings through it, then he has introduced an abomination and a lie from the matter.

Seventhly: Reincarnation

1) The Meaning of 'reincarnation' is the belief that the soul leaves the body after death in order to reside in another body. Thus if a man was evil, his soul would move to the body of a creature as a punishment for him; and if he was good, his soul would

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, and at-Tabarani.
(2) Transmitted by Ibn Abi Shaybah and Ibn Sad in at-Tabaqat.
(3) Transmitted by Ibn Abi Shaybah.

pass to the body of another man. And this moving of soul from one body to another goes on for eternity.

2) The ruling on believing in reincarnation

Indeed one who looks into the belief of reincarnation can see that it is inconsistent with what the divinely revealed laws and religions came with from a number of angles:

a) The soul is part of an unseen world and it is one among the secrets of Allah the Exalted which He alone possesses knowledge of. So no one knows its reality except Him the Glorified, as He the Exalted said:

﴿ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

"And they ask you (O Mohammed SAW) concerning the Ruh (the Spirit); Say: 'The Ruh (the Spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little'."[17:86]

b) Matters of the unseen - and the soul is among them - have a path to their knowledge and it is the divine revelation which Allah reveals to His messengers and Prophets. So where is the authentic evidence for this evil fairy tale?!

c) The reality of earthly life and academic principles both confirm the invalidity of this fairy tale since recent science has not uncovered any phenomena pointing to the transmigration of souls, their reincarnation, or their residence in created beings; and the secrets of death, the world between death and the Resurrection, and the time in the grave are impossible to discover or penetrate. And this affirms that the soul is an Unseen matter whose secrets and reality human beings are unable to understand through experiments or observation.

Eighthly: Fear of Jinn and Satan

The fear that human beings have is divided into three parts:

First is natural fear like fear of enemies, beasts and other things like that. And this type of fear is not blameworthy for indeed this type of fear exists in all human beings even the Prophets (peace be upon them), as Allah the Exalted said about Musa (peace be upon him):

﴿ فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ﴾

"So he escaped from there, looking about in a state of fear."[28:21]

Second: Fear of creation leading to the neglect of obligations or the performance of prohibited acts like a person testifying to a lie out of fear of a friend or deputy of the ruler. This is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) was denouncing when he said: 'Do not let

fear of people prevent one of you from saying the truth when you have witnessed it or know about it'.[1]

This type of fear is a prohibited type of fear due to it being linked with the rights of the slaves and their fulfilment.

Third is fear of the hidden reality and it is fearing something other than Allah in what only Allah the Exalted is capable of like fear of Jinn, devils, witches and conjurers, while believing that they have an inherent ability to cause harm or evil to a person.

This type of fear is a form of worship in the heart which should not be expended except for Allah the Exalted. So there should not be anything in the heart of a person except fear of Allah since He the Glorified is the one who benefits or harms, good and evil are from His creation, and it is He who made these things possible for the creation and made them causes and effects. Thus the creatures among the Jinn and devils are but a means that Allah created for the implementation of the universal decree which He the Glorified ordained and decided. So the Muslim individual should not fear them per se because Allah the Exalted said:

﴿فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ﴾

"…So fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers."[3:175]

So whoever expends this type of fear and grants it to something other than Allah, then he has fallen into major polytheism, and refuge is sought in Allah from that.

There is no doubt about it that the Jinn and devils are weaker than the believing individual whose heart is filled with faith and built upon obedience of the Most Merciful. The proof of that is in the statement of Allah the Exalted:

﴿إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا﴾

"Ever feeble indeed is the plot of Shaitan (Satan)."[4:76]

And Allah the Exalted does not grant them authority over the believing slaves of Allah, as He the Exalted said:

﴿إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا﴾

"Verily! My slaves (i.e the true believers of Islamic Monotheism), you have no authority over them. And All-Sufficient is your Lord as a Guardian."[17:65]

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad and Ibn Hibban.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) informed us that Satan fears the believers, just as he addressed Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) saying: ‘Indeed Satan is afraid of you Oh Umar’.[1] And this was not specific to Umar, rather all who have strong faith and whose heart is connected with Allah, the One and Only God, will achieve what Umar achieved. On authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

‘Indeed the believer wears out his devil just as one of you wears out his camel during a journey’.[2]

The meaning of ‘wear out’ is to emaciate and tire him out.

That which affirms the weakness of the Jinn and devils in front of the individual is that they do not have the strength to listen to the remembrance of Allah, hear the call to prayer, or the opening words of the prayer, rather they flee from the place in which the name of Allah is being mentioned, and they are not able to open the closed door or covered container when the name of Allah is mentioned over them.

However how does the fear of Jinn and devils develop among individuals?

The answer to that is in the statement of Allah the Glorified and Exalted:

﴿ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَٰنُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِهِۦ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

“His power is only over those who obey and follow him (Satan), and those who join partners with Him (Allah) [i.e. those who are Mushrikun - polytheists - see Verse 6:121].”[16:100]

Thus whoever obeys the Jinn and the devils, subjugates himself and gives in to them, then weakness, impotence, and fear befall him just as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ﴾

“And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the jinns, but they (jinns) increased them (mankind) in sin and disbelief.”[72:6]

And He the Lofty of Affair said:

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزًّا ﴾

“See you not that We have sent the Shayatin (devils) against the disbelievers to push them to do evil.”[19:83]

(1) Transmitted by At-Tirmidhi.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad.

In other words, He stirs them and agitates them. So he whose heart is empty of faith, who has turned away from the remembrance of Allah, from seeking refuge and taking shelter in it, then the devils prevail over him and harm him, and his heart fills with fear of them due to the absence of his confidence in Allah the Exalted His help, and His safekeeping. Then there does not remain a preventing armor or cover to protect him from them.

So when fear of the Jinn and devils reaches a level where one believes that they have an ability and power to cause harm without cause, then this is fear of the hidden reality which is major polytheism and refuge is sought in Allah from that.

As for when the fear of them is on account of the weakness of an individual, and he fears is from being injured and attacked by them due to one among the means, like going into deserted or dark places, then this falls under natural fear because it is the nature of Jinn and devils to harm human beings, and it does not fall under the prohibited or polytheistic type of fear.

Ninthly: Celebration and Participation in Non-Muslim Holidays

Holidays of the various peoples, nations, and religions are considered a symbol and token of their religious beliefs, thus there is no nation among the various peoples except it has a holiday which it celebrates, and they practice any number of rites in it based upon what is stated by their beliefs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) pointed that out when he said: ‘Indeed for every people is a holiday, and this is ours’.[1]

1) The celebration and participation of a Muslim in non-Muslim festivals

Considering that holidays represent the beliefs and symbols of whoever is celebrating it and it makes him proud, Islam is devoted to being distinguished by its holidays in order to be an indication of its lasting, deep-rooted beliefs. So its prohibits the celebration of anything other than what Allah legislated of holidays for this religion. On authority of Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him): ‘The messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) settled in Medina and they had two days they had fun in, so he said:

“What are these two days?”

They said: “We used to have fun during them in the times of ignorance”. So the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

“Indeed Allah has exchanged them both for you with what is better than them- the day of the sacrifice and the day of breaking the fast”.’[2]

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not approve of his companions having fun during the holidays of the times of ignorance in accordance with what custom dictated, and he clarified for them that Allah had exchanged for them what was better than it. So it is not correct to join together the substitute and what was changed.

This meaning had become firmly established with the predecessors of this community among the companions and second generation of followers, for they were cautious of participating with non-Muslims in their holidays. On authority of Umar, he said: ‘Keep away from the enemies of Allah during their holiday’.(1)

On authority of Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: ‘Whoever settles in the land of the non-Arabs, celebrates their new year and their festival, and imitates them until he dies like that, he will be gathered with them on the Day of Resurrection’.(2)

On authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), in an explanation of the statement of Allah the Exalted:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَشۡهَدُونَ ٱلزُّورَ ﴾

“And those who do not witness falsehood…”[25:72]

He said: ‘It is the holidays of the polytheists’.(3) On authority of Ibn Sireen, he said: ‘“Do not witness falsehood” refers to ‘Palm Sunday’, from among the holidays of the Christians’. And on authority of ar-Rabi’ ibn Anas, he said: ‘It is the holidays of the polytheists’.

Thus the Muslim is commanded to contradict non-Muslims in their beliefs, holidays, and outward appearance since resemblance on the surface breeds resemblance on the interior. And the Prophet (peace be upon him) denounced that when he said:

‘Whoever imitates a people, then he is from them’.(4)

2) Congratulating non-Muslims regarding their holidays

Congratulation refers to the invocation that follows happiness in order to rejuvenate kindness or dispel rancor, and it is between people in proportion to the friendship between them as a result of knowing and mixing with one another.

The scholars of Islam have clarified that congratulating non-Muslims in the symbols of their religion and holidays particular to them is among the matters upon which their

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī in at-Tarikh al-Kabir.
(2) Transmitted by Al-Bayhaqi.
(3) Transmitted by Al-Khatib in his Tarikh Baghdad.
(4) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

prohibition is agreed upon. So one does not bless them regarding their celebration nor give congratulations in their holidays even if the non-Muslim congratulates the Muslim in his holidays. For if the Muslim believes that his religion is the truth, what it came with is true, and that anything else which people altered or invented themselves is only falsehood.

Considering that holidays are part and parcel with beliefs, the holidays of non-Muslims are among their falsehoods which are not permissible for Muslim to approve of or return congratulations for since congratulating for it is an approval of it. And considering what is in it of falsehood, the Muslim should not approve of the people of falsehood for their falsehood.

In conclusion, these issues which we have examined a portion of are of utmost importance and gravity, and due to that the Muslim should be concerned with knowing their rulings so that he can safeguard his religion and beliefs from becoming mixed with what will corrupt and remove them, and this way he can meet Allah the Glorified and Exalted pleased with Him and pleasing to Him, in a profitable meeting place.

CHAPTER THREE

The Worship of a Muslim

The Rulings of Purification

Purity is equivalent to half of faith, it is the key to al-Salah, and its most important condition as prayer is not accepted except through completing it. Purification is a form of worship through which one draws closer to Allah the Exalted. It is for this reason that Allah praised the inhabitants of the City of Qubaa in the following verse:

﴿ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُطَّهِّرِينَ ﴾

"In it are men who love to clean and to purify themselves. and Allah loves those who make themselves clean and pure (i.e. who clean their private parts with dust [i.e. to be considered as soap) and water from urine and stools, after answering the call of nature]. [9:108]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Purity is half of faith." [(1)]

In this chapter, we will explore the literal and Islamic definition of purification and examine the types of water that can be used for purifying the body. We will also look at the rulings regarding the use of water vessels and the etiquette of answering the call to nature and cleansing oneself. We will then look at the rulings of ablution and wiping over leather socks and finally conclude the chapter by looking at the rulings of dry ablution, which is performed when no water is available or it is not possible to make use of available water.

Firstly: The definition of al-Taharah (Purification)

Linguistically: Cleanliness from physical filth such as urine or faeces and symbolic filth such as polytheism and evil deeds. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴾

"Allah wishes only to remove ar-Rijs (evil deeds and sins, etc.) from you, O members of the family (of the Prophet), and to purify you with a thorough purification." [33:33]

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

Islamically, it means the removal of the state of impurity and the cleansing away of filth.

The removal of the state of impurity is to enable oneself to perform acts of worship such as the daily prayers.

There are two states of impurity:

The minor state of impurity which is caused by actions such as the passing of wind which requires the performance of ablution in order to remove.

The major state of impurity which is caused by actions such as the excretion of semen which requires the performance of an Islamic bath in order to remove.

The cleansing away of filth is performed by removing it from the body, the clothing and the place.

Secondly: The categories of water

There are three categories of water and they are:

1) The water that is pure and purifying.

This is water in its original form in which it is created irrespective of whether it comes from a spring, fountain, rain, sea, river or well.

The ruling: This category of water is pure in itself and purifying for others. It is therefore able to remove the state of minor and major impurity and cleanse away filth as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِۦ﴾

"And He caused water (rain) to descend on you from the sky, to clean you thereby." [8:11]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when talking about seawater said:

"Its water is pure and its dead (creatures) are lawful."[1]

If this type of water is mixed with something else that is also pure such as the leaves of a tree or lote etcetera and the other thing does not prevail over the water then the water remains pure and it is permissible to purify oneself with it.

2) The water that is pure but not purifying.

This is the water that has changed in its colour, taste or smell after having mixed with something else that is also pure i.e. vinegar. It will no longer be purifying.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, and an-Nasa'ī.

The ruling: It is permissible to use in other things, but not for removing the state of impurity or cleansing away filth.

3) Impure

This is the water which has mixed with something impure causing it to change in at least one of its properties: colour, taste or smell.

Impurity

These are the filthy things which a Muslim is required to stay away from and to cleanse themselves from. They include human urine, faeces and flowing blood as well as other things.

If a Muslim is doubtful about the purity or impurity of water then they should base their decision on what they are certain of and this is the basic principle in regards to the purity of things.

If purifying water is mixed with non-purifying water that cannot be used to remove the state of impurity then all of the water should be left and a person should perform Tayammum (dry ablution).

Thirdly: The rulings in regards to vessels:

1) The definition of vessels:

Vessels as a word, is the plural form of vessel, which means a container that keeps water etcetera.

The general rule in regards to vessels is that of permissibility as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ﴾

He it is who created for you all that is on earth. [2:29]

2) The conditions of using vessels:

There are three conditions when using vessels:

Firstly:

The vessels must be pure; therefore, it is prohibited to use dog or pigskin because it cannot be pure by sacrificing or tanning.

Tanning is the treatment of animal skin with salt and other materials so that the bad smell, rotting, and dampness are removed. Moreover, the vessels made from the skin of carrion cannot be used unless its flesh had been eaten and its skin tanned as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the following Prophetic tradition:

"When the skin is tanned it becomes purified"[(1)]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Secondly:

The vessels must be owned by the user or they should have the permission of the owner to use it. It is not permissible to purify oneself by stolen vessels or by those which the owner did not give the permission to use.

Thirdly:

The vessel being used for purification must not be from those that have been prohibited to use, such as those that are either made of gold and silver, or plated by them as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the following Prophetic tradition:

"Do not drink from vessels of gold and silver, and do not eat in the dishes made of them (i. e. gold and silver), for these are for them (the non-believers) in this world, and for us in the hereafter" (1)

This prohibition applies equally for men and women, and the rules of using the vessels for purification are the same applied to eating and drinking.

If a person uses a prohibited vessel or one that has been stolen and the like then the user is sinful for using them, but their purification holds good.

It is permissible to use vessels which have a small amount of silver in them such as those that have been repaired after cracking when there is a need for the same as we find in the prophetic tradition of Anas Ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him):

"When the cup of Allah's Apostle had broken, he (peace be upon him) repaired it with a silver wire in the place of the crack."(2)

3) The rulings in regards to the vessels and clothing of non-Muslims:

a) The general rule in regards to the use of vessels belonging to non-Muslims is that they are pure because the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) used them as we find in the following prophetic tradition:

The Prophet (peace be upon him) emptied the waterskin belonging to a polytheist woman then he watered the people and gave a man who was impure water to bathe with.(3)

b) If it is known that the vessel was used by the non-Muslims with something impure then it becomes obligatory to wash it before using as we find in the Prophetic narration of Abu Tha`laba al-Khushani (may Allah be pleased with him):

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(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

I came to Allah's Apostle (peace be upon him) and said, “O Allah's Apostle! We live in the land of the people of the Scripture, should we eat in their vessels? The Prophet said:

“If you can find vessels other than theirs, do not eat in their vessels, but if you do not then wash their vessels and eat in them.”[1]

c) Whatever was sewn and produced by non-Muslims is pure; it is permissible to wear, however, if it is an undergarment then it is obligatory to wash it in order to avoid impurities.

d) Nothing becomes impure through doubting, rather it must be established that there is impurity because the general rule is that things are pure unless proven otherwise.

Fourthly: The etiquette of entering the toilet and answering the call of nature (Istinjaa)

1) The definition of Istinjaa

Istinjaa: The cleansing of the private parts with water.

Istijmaar: The cleansing of the private parts with a stone, paper, etcetera

To cleanse the private parts with water is preferred over cleansing them with paper as it is more effective in cleaning impurities, but if both are combined it is best.

2) The ruling of Istinjaa

It is obligatory to perform Istinjaa of the private parts after answering the call of nature based on the statement of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when he said:

“If any of you goes to the toilet then let him take with him three stones so that he can cleanse himself with them as they will suffice for him.”[2] And he also said:

“Let him wash his penis and perform ablution.”[3]

However, if the emission from the private parts is not impure such as the passing of wind then one is not required to perform Istinjaa.

3) The etiquette of entering the toilet and answering the call of nature.

a) One should not use their right hand or less than three stones and they should not use bones, manure or food to cleanse themselves.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

b) They should not face or put their back towards the direction of the Qiblah when answering the call of nature.

c) To move away from the people and conceal themselves when answering the call of nature especially when defecating.

d) To recite the following supplication before entering the toilet:

(بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْـخُبْثِ وَالْـخَبَائِثِ)

Bismillah. Allahumma inni ao'oudhobikah minnal khubthee wal khabaith

"In the name of Allah. O Allah, I seek your protection from the male and female devils."

And to then enter with the left foot. And to leave with the right foot and recite the following supplication:

(غُفْرَانَكَ)

Ghuffranak

"O Allah, I seek your forgiveness."

e) A person should urinate in a place so that the urine does not splash back or drip on themselves. It is best for a man to sit down while urinating, but it is not disliked to stand if a person can ensure that they will not be spoiled by the urine.

f) A person should not take with them -while answering the call of nature- anything that contains verses of the Quran or the name of Allah unless there is an urgency to do so.

g) A person should not answer the call of nature in the following places that people usually benefit from: The pathway of pedestrians, shelters, places of water or under a fruit-bearing tree.

h) To wash away from their clothing any impurities that may have spoiled them. If they are not certain where their clothing was spoiled, they should wash the whole garment.

Fifthly: The rulings of Wudhu (Ablution)

1) The definition of Wudhu

Islamically, Wudhu is the use of purifying water to wash the following four parts of the body: The face, hands, head and feet in the way that has been described in the Islamic sources and in its proper sequence and consecutiveness along with the other obligatory actions.

2) The ruling of Wudhu

Wudhu is obligatory upon a person who is in a state of minor impurity and wants to perform the prayer or similar actions such as reading from the Holy Quran, as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغْسِلُوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْمَرَافِقِ وَٱمْسَحُوا۟ بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْكَعْبَيْنِ ﴾

O You who believe! When you intend to offer As-Salât (the prayer), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles. [5:6]

And the prayer is not accepted without it as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has said:

"*Allah does not accept* the prayer of one who nullified his *ablution until* he performs it."(1)

3) The virtue of Wudhu

There are many Prophetic narrations that discuss the virtue of Wudhu such as the following:

When a Muslim washes his face every sin he performed with his eyes will be washed away from his face along with water, or with the last drop of water ; when he washes his hands, every sin they performed will be washed away from his hands with the water, or with the last drop of water; and when he washes his feet, every sin towards which his feet have walked will be washed away with the water, or with the last drop of water, with the result that he becomes purified from all sins.(2)

4) The obligatory actions of Wudhu.

There are a total of six actions that are obligatory and they are:

a) Washing the face which includes rinsing the mouth and nostrils. *(Please see illustration number one)*.

b) Washing the hands up to and including the elbows. *(Please see illustration number two)*.

c) Wiping with wet hands over the head and ears.

d) Washing the feet up to and including the ankles. *(Please see illustration number three)*.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

e) Observing the proper sequence so that one begins with the face then the hands, head and finally the feet.

f) Having consecutiveness throughout the performance of Wudhu so that one does not leave a long interval between the washing of one limb and the other.

5) The Sunnah (commendable) actions of Wudhu

They are the following actions:

a) Using the Miswaak (herbal teeth cleaning twig)

b) Reciting 'Bismillah' -In the name of Allah- in the beginning.

c) To rinse the hands before performing Wudhu and if the person has awakened from sleep then they should rinse their hands three times before putting them into the water vessel.

d) To rinse the mouth and nose before washing the face and to wash them with one handful of water and to rinse them thoroughly if one is not fasting.

e) To pass the wet fingers of one hand through the fingers of the other and to repeat the same for the toes and for a thick beard.

f) To always start by washing the right limb before the left.

g) To rub water into the limbs.

h) To rinse the limbs of the body a second and third time.

i) To perform the rinsing of every limb thoroughly.

j) To recite supplications after the completion of Wudhu

k) To recite two units of prayer upon completing Wudhu.

6) The description of Wudhu

The complete description of Wudhu including the obligatory and commendable actions is as follows:

a) To make the intention in one's heart for the performance of Wudhu. It should not be done verbally.

b) Reciting 'Bismillah' -In the name of Allah-

c) Then rinse the hands three times and remove any substance -such as paint- that may obstruct water reaching the skin before washing them.

d) To rinse the mouth and nose with one handful of water taking the water up in the right hand and blowing the nose with the left hand three times and to rinse them thoroughly if one is not fasting.

e) To wash the face three times horizontally from ear to ear and vertically from the top of the forehead to below the chin and to pass the fingers through the beard.

f) To rinse the right hand three times from the tips of the fingers to past the elbow rubbing water into the skin and to pass the fingers of one hand through the other then to repeat the same for the left hand.

g) Then to wipe over the head with wet hands by starting at the top of the forehead and drawing the hands towards the back of the head and back again to their starting point. Then to place the right and left index fingers of the hand into the respective outer cavity of the ear and to use the thumbs to wipe the back of the ears.

h) Then to wash the right foot three times from the tip of the toes up to and including the ankle. Then to pass the fingers through each of the toes to ensure that water has reached in between the toes. This should then be repeated for the left foot.

i) Then to recite the following supplication:

(أشهدُ أنْ لا إلهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وحْدَهُ لا شريكَ لهُ ، وأشهدُ أنَّ محمدًا عَبْدُهُ ورسولُهُ . اللهمَّ اجعلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَّابينَ ، واجعلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ)

I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no partner; and I bear witness that Mohammed is His slave and His Messenger. O Allah, make me among those who turn to You in repentance, and make me among those who are purified.

7) The nullifiers of Wudhu

There are a total of five actions and they are:

a) The emission from either of the private parts.

b) The emission of anything impure from the human body.

c) The temporary or permanent loss of sense caused by insanity, unconsciousness, sleeping or drunkenness.

d) To touch the private parts in a state of arousal.

e) To become an apostate.

Sixthly: The ruling in regards to wiping over the Khuff

1) The definition of wiping over the khuff during the performance of Wudhu.

The khuff is a piece of attire worn on the foot similar to a sock and it is made of leather or similar materials. Anything that is made of wool or similar materials and also worn on the foot follows the same ruling. The dual form of khuff is khuffain

Wiping over the khuffain means to wipe with wet hands over the top of the khuffain with the intention of removing the state of impurity. After performing this, the person no longer needs to wash their feet.

2) The ruling of wiping over the khuffain

Allah has blessed us with the dispensation of using the khuffain in order to ease the affairs and reduce the burden and difficulty upon His slaves. If a person is wearing the khuffain then it is better for them to wipe over it than to remove them and wash their feet because the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) would not remove them if he was wearing them, but if he was not he would wash his feet.

3) The permissible duration for wiping over the khuffain

It remains permissible to wipe over the khuffain for a period of twenty-four hours for the person who is resident and for a period of seventy-two hours for a person who is travelling. The time starts from the point at which a person first breaks his Wudhu after having put on the khuffain.

4) The conditions for wiping over the khuffain

The following conditions apply:

a) The khuff should be worn while a person is in a complete state of purity.

b) The khuff must be of a permissible nature not stolen and for men it should not be made of silk.

c) The khuff should be pure; not made from the leather of pigs, dogs or carrion.

d) The khuff should cover the entire area of the foot that is usually washed during ablution.

e) The khuff should be thick so that the skin underneath it cannot be seen.

f) The wiping over the khuffain should be within the prescribed period and not after.

5) The description of wiping over the khuffain

The prescribed area of the khuffain that should be wiped is the top only. The back and bottom should not be wiped. *(Please see illustration number four)*.

The proper method of wiping over the khuffain is done by first wetting the hands then to put the hands on the top of the toes and to draw them up until they reach the start of the shin. The right hand should be used for the right foot and the left should be used for the left foot. The wiping should not be done more than once.

6) The nullifiers of wiping over the khuffain

There are three things that nullify the wiping over the khuffain:

a) If a person is required to perform the Islamic bath because of major impurity.

b) The expiration of the prescribed period for wiping over the khuffain.

c) The removal of the khuffain from the feet.

It is also permissible for a Muslim to wipe over their socks based on the preceding conditions. However, the socks must not be thin or torn and they must cover the entire area of the foot that is usually washed during ablution.

7) Wiping over bandages

It is permissible for a person to wipe over bandages, plasters, and similar things that are used for treating fractures, burns and similar wounds irrespective of whether a person is in a state of minor or major impurity and it should be done only on that particular area and the area near the fracture or wound based on the need. The wiping should take place over the whole bandage and there is no prescribed duration for wiping over it, but it should be repeated until the bandages are removed or the wound has healed. In concluding, the completion of ablution does not require that the bandages be removed.

Seventhly: The rulings of Ghusl (Islamic bath)

1) The definition of Ghusl

The utilization of purifying water to wash the entire body in a specific method that will shortly be explained.

2) The ruling of Ghusl

It is obligatory upon a Muslim to performing Ghusl when they have come into a state of major impurity based on the commandment of Allah in the following verse:

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقْرَبُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَـٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُواْ مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِى سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُواْ ﴾

O you who believe! Approach not As-Salât (the prayer) when you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter, nor when you are in a state of Janâba, (i.e. in a state of sexual impurity and have not yet taken a bath) except when travelling on the road, till you wash your whole body. (4:43)

And the statement of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when he said:

"If a man sits in between the four limbs of a woman and their sexual organs touch each other then it becomes obligatory to perform Ghusl."(1)

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

3) The actions that necessitate of Ghusl

There are six obligatory actions:

a) The emission of sperm with desire from a man or woman. If a person is sleeping then they need only see the sperm on their clothing even if they do not recollect seeing a dream.

b) The entrance of the head of the male sexual organ into the female sexual organ.

c) The death of a Muslim excluding martyrs who are not to be washed.

d) The termination of menses which occurs at the age of female puberty.

e) The termination of post-partum bleeding.

4) The commendable Ghusl

There are some occasions that do not necessitate Ghusl, but it is recommended for a Muslim to be committed to them. Some of them are:

a) Performing Ghusl for the Friday prayer

b) Performing Ghusl for the Eid prayer

c) Performing Ghusl before wearing the attire for Haj and Umrah

d) Performing Ghusl before entering the Holy City of Makkah

e) Performing Ghusl before going to the plain of Arafah

f) Performing Ghusl after having washed a dead corpse

g) Performing Ghusl after falling unconscious

h) Performing Ghusl after entering the fold of Islam

5) The obligatory actions of Ghusl

The following are the actions that must be completed for Ghusl to be complete

a) To make the intention in one's heart for the performance of Ghusl in order to remove the state of major impurity irrespective of whether it is from menses, post-partum bleeding or sexual intercourse. The same applies for the commendable occasions of performing Ghusl.

b) To ensure that water reaches every part of the body including the concealed areas such as inside the navel, between the buttocks and underneath the armpits, chin and knees. The mouth and nose must also be rinsed.

c) To pass wet fingers through the hair to ensure that water reaches the skin.

d) For a female to untie and wash her hair if she is performing Ghusl owing to her menses or post-partum bleeding, not when she is impure due to intercourse.

6) The Sunnah (commendable) actions during Ghusl

They are as follows:

a) Reciting 'Bismillah' -In the name of Allah- in the beginning.

b) Washing the hands thrice.

c) To remove any impurities from the body by rubbing and washing off.

d) To perform Wudhu before the Ghusl.

e) To pour water over the head thrice.

f) To begin with the right side of the head and body.

g) To rub water into the whole body.

h) To wash the feet in a different place from the place of bathing.

i) To be thrifty in the use of water and not wasteful.

j) To supplicate at the end of bathing as done in the Wudhu

7) The description of Ghusl

There are two methods of performing Ghusl. The first is the complete method and the second is the concise method.

Firstly: The Complete Method.

It comprises of the obligatory and commendable actions.

a) To make the intention in one's heart.

b) To recite 'Bismillah' and wash the hands thrice.

c) To wash with water and soap the sexual organ by using the left hand so that any impurities can be removed.

d) To perform the full ablution including the washing of the feet; sometimes this can also be done at the end of bathing.

e) Then one should pour three cupfuls of water on the right side of their head and repeat the process for the left side and then the middle. They should rub the water into the roots of their hair to ensure it reaches the scalp.

f) Then one should wash their whole body once and it is commendable to start with the right side and to then rub water into the body to ensure it covers the whole body.

g) To supplicate at the end of bathing as done in the Wudhu

Secondly: The concise method necessitates that a person should make the intention, then wash their whole body and conclude by rinsing their mouth and nose.

8) The actions that are forbidden upon a person in the state of major impurity

The following actions are forbidden:

a) The five daily prayers.

b) The circumambulation of the Sacred House in Makkah.

c) To remain in any mosque.

d) To touch the Holy Quran.

e) To recite the Holy Quran.

Eighthly: The rulings of Tayammum (Dry ablution)

1) The definition of Tayammum

The wiping of the face and hands with pure soil in a specific method that will shortly be explained.

2) The ruling of Tayammum

If a person intends to observe the daily prayer or to perform another action that requires the removal of the state of impurity and they cannot find water or are unable to use water then they may perform Tayammum. This is a dispensation from Allah as stated in the following verse:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا قُمۡتُمۡ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغۡسِلُواْ وُجُوهَكُمۡ وَأَيۡدِيَكُمۡ إِلَى ٱلۡمَرَافِقِ
وَٱمۡسَحُواْ بِرُءُوسِكُمۡ وَأَرۡجُلَكُمۡ إِلَى ٱلۡكَعۡبَيۡنِۚ وَإِن كُنتُمۡ جُنُبٗا فَٱطَّهَّرُواْۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرۡضَىٰٓ أَوۡ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ أَوۡ جَآءَ أَحَدٞ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡغَآئِطِ أَوۡ لَٰمَسۡتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمۡ تَجِدُواْ مَآءٗ فَتَيَمَّمُواْ صَعِيدٗا طَيِّبٗا فَٱمۡسَحُواْ
بِوُجُوهِكُمۡ وَأَيۡدِيكُم مِّنۡهُۚ مَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيَجۡعَلَ عَلَيۡكُم مِّنۡ حَرَجٖ وَلَٰكِن يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمۡ
وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعۡمَتَهُۥ عَلَيۡكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ﴾

O you who believe! When you intend to offer As-Salât (the prayer), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles if you are in a state of Janâba (i.e. had a sexual discharge), purify yourself (bathe your whole body) but if you are ill or on a journey or

any of you comes from answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (i.e. sexual intercourse) and you find no water, then perform Tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. Allah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete Hi favour on you that you may be thankful. [5:6]

And the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The soil is a purifier for a Muslim, even if he does not find water for twenty years." Then if he finds water he should touch it (should make ablution) for it would be good.[1]

Therefore, making Tayammum with soil and similar substances with the intention of removing the state of minor or major impurity is like using water until the excuse for not using water ceases or water is found. Once this occurs, Tayammum is no longer valid.

3) Who is permitted to make Tayammum?

a) A person who cannot find water or because of its distance cannot reach the water they are aware of.

b) A person who is unwell and fears that by using water his illness will become worse or he will be affected adversely by very cold water.

c) A person who has water, but needs it to drink or give someone else in case of thirst.

And if a person does not find enough water to perform Wudhu or Ghusl then they should use the water they have to wash their body then perform Tayammum for the parts that have not been washed.

4) The obligatory actions of Tayammum

They are as follows:

a) To make the intention of removing the state of impurity.

b) To wipe the face.

c) To wipe the hands up to the wrists. *(Please see illustration number five)*.

d) Consecutiveness between the wiping of the face and hands.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhī.

5) The Sunnah (commendable) actions of Tayammum

They are as follows:

a) Reciting 'Bismillah' -In the name of Allah- in the beginning.

b) Observing the proper sequence so that one begins with the face then the hands.

c) To pass the fingers of one hand through the fingers of the other.

d) To blow away or dust off any soil that has become stuck to the hands.

6) The description of Tayammum

To start by making the intention and then saying 'Bismillah'. Then to strike the earth once with the palms and wipe over the face and hands ensuring that the whole hand from the edges of the fingers to the bone of the wrist is covered.

7) The nullifiers of Tayammum

There are two things that nullify Tayammum:

1) Water is found or the excuse for not using water ceases.

2) Tayammum is nullified by any form of minor or major impurity that requires the performance of Wudhu or Ghusl because the substitute is nullified by that which nullifies the original.

If a person cannot find water or is unable to use water and after performing the prayer the situation changes or they find water, they do not need to repeat their prayer even if there is still time left for the prayer, but if they find water or are able to use it while they are performing their prayer, they should break their prayer and repeat it after purifying with water.

8) The ruling in regards to those not having water or soil

If a person cannot find water or soil or they are unable to use them, such as a person who is tied up, then they should perform their prayer in the state that they are in.

The Rulings of Salah
(Five Daily Prayers)

Firstly: The definition of Salah

Salah is a form of worship that combines specific statements and actions that are initiated by saying the *Takbeer* (announcing the greatness of Allah) and concluded by the *Salaam* (concluding salutation)

Secondly: The ruling in regards to Salah

Salah is the greatest pillar of Islam after the Testimony of Faith and it is the most expressive and essential as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has informed us. It was made obligatory by Allah upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) during the Isra wal-Miraaj (The Miraculous Night Journey) while he was above the seventh heaven. This displays to us the high importance and status of Salah as it should be in the life of a Muslim and for this reason Allah commanded us to safeguard Salah as he said in the Quran:

﴿حَٰفِظُواْ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلۡوُسۡطَىٰ وَقُومُواْ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ﴾

Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawât (the prayers) especially the middle Salat (i.e. Asr) and stand before Allah with obedience [and do not speak to others during the Salat (prayers)]. [2:238]

Thirdly: The Virtue of Salah

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) informed us in many narrations the virtue of Salah and some of them are:

The five (daily) prayers, from one Friday prayer to the next Friday prayer and from Ramadan to Ramadan expiate for the (sins) committed in between, provided one shuns the major sins.[1]

And he (peace be upon him) also said when talking to his companions:

"Do you think that if there was a river at the door of any of you and he bathed in it five times daily, any filthiness will remain on (his body)?" They said: "Nothing of his filthiness will remain." He said: "That is the similitude of the five prayers by which Allah wipes out sins."[2]

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim

Fourthly: The number of obligatory prayers and their timings

The number of prayers that are obligatory upon a Muslim during one day and night are five and they are:

Fajr, which consists of two units; Dhuhr and Asr which both have four units; Maghrib which has three units; and Isha which also has four units. Each of these prayers has a prescribed period of time in which they must be completed as Allah has commanded:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتۡ عَلَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ كِتَٰبٗا مَّوۡقُوتٗا﴾

(*Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours. (4:103*

And the timings for these prayers are as follows:

1) Salat al-Dhuhr

The start of the time for Dhuhr is when the sun has passed its zenith i.e. has passed the middle part of the sky and started to descend towards the west and it continues until the shadow of everything is equal in length to the object itself after which point the time for Dhuhr ends.

2) Salat al-Asr

It begins from the time that Dhuhr ends i.e. when the shadow of everything is equal in length to the object itself and it ends at sunset.

3) Salat al-Maghrib

It begins from sunset until the twilight or red glow has disappeared.

4) Salat al-Isha

It begins from the time the red glow has disappeared until midnight.

5) Salat al-Fajr

It begins from the onset of the second dawn and continues until sunrise.

These are the timings for the five daily prayers that Allah has obligated. It is required for every Muslim to adhere to these prescribed times so that a person does not pray before or after the correct time, as Allah has warned the person those who delays their prayer in the Quran:

﴿فَوَيۡلٞ لِّلۡمُصَلِّينَ ٤ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ عَن صَلَاتِهِمۡ سَاهُونَ﴾

So woe unto those performers of Salât (prayers) who delay their Salât (prayer) from their stated fixed times. [107:4-5]

And whoever forgets or sleeps through a prayer unintentionally should pray immediately upon realising, based upon the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Whoever misses the prayer due to forgetfulness or sleep then their expiation is to perform it upon remembering."(1)

Moreover, Muslims should know that one of the most beloved and virtuous actions to Allah is to perform the prayer punctually, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked:

"Which action is the most beloved to Allah?" He answered; "To perform the prayer on time."(2)

Fifthly: Who is Salat obligatory upon?

Salah is obligatory upon every Muslim male who has reached the age of puberty and is sane and the same applies for females who are not in menses or post-partum bleeding. Salah is not obligatory upon non-Muslims, the insane, those under the age of puberty, in their menses or post-partum bleeding as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has informed us:

"The pen has been lifted for three i.e. their deeds are not recorded: The sleeping person until he awakes; the child until he reaches puberty; and the insane person until he regains sanity."(3)

And the narration of Mu'adha al-Adawiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) when she asked Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) the following:

"What is the reason that a menstruating woman makes up the fasts (that she is required to abandon during her monthly period), but she does not make up the prayer?" She said: "That used to happen to us and were ordered to make up the fast, but were not ordered to complete the prayers."(4)

However, children should be ordered by their parents to start praying when they become seven years old and should be disciplined if they leave the prayer when they are ten as the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught us in the following narration:

"Command your children to pray when they become seven years old and discipline them for it when they become ten years old; and arrange their beds separately."(5)

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.
(4) Transmitted by Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.

Sixthly: The conditions for the acceptance of Salah

In order for Salah to be accepted the following conditions must be met:

1) Islam- as the Salah of a non-Muslim is not accepted

2) Sanity- as the prayer of an insane or intoxicated person is not accepted

3) Ritual purity from both major and minor impurity- as the prayer of a person who is ritually impure is not accepted as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has informed us:

“Prayer is not accepted from a person in a state of impurity.”[1]

And minor impurity requires of a person to perform ablution and is caused by urinating or defecating.

Major impurity requires a person to perform an Islamic ritual bath and is caused by the emission of semen and other excretions as discussed in the chapter on purity earlier.

4) The start of prayer time, based on the instruction of Allah the Exalted in the Quran:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتۡ عَلَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ كِتَٰبٗا مَّوۡقُوتٗا ﴾

“Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.” [4:103]

Therefore any prayer performed before the start of its time is not accepted.

5) To cover the Awrah (nakedness) with clothing that does not show the skin based on the command of Allah in the Quran:

﴿يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُواْ زِينَتَكُمۡ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسۡجِدٖ ﴾

“O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing clean clothes), while praying.” [7:31]

The Awrah of a man is the area between his navel and his knees and for a woman it is her whole body, excluding her face and hands.

6) To stay away from all forms of impurity on one’s body, clothing and place of prayer as much as is possible.

7) To face the Qiblah i.e. the direction of the Holy House of Allah in Mecca as much as possible, as Allah the Exalted has commanded in the Quran:

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

﴿فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ﴾

We see the turning of thy face (for guidance to the heavens: Now shall we turn thee to a Qiblah that shall please thee. turn then thy face in the direction of the sacred Mosque: Wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction. the people of the Book know well that that is the truth from their Lord. nor is Allah unmindful of what they do. [2:144]

8) The intention should be made in the heart before the prayer based on what prayer one intends to perform, irrespective of whether it is Dhuhr, Asr or Maghrib as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

"Verily actions are governed by their intentions."

The intention should not be made verbally as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) did not practice this.

9) The Tamyeez of the child who is below the age of puberty. A child is regarded as Mu'mayiz (rational) if they have reached the age of seven or is able to distinguish between routine acts and acts of worship.

Seventhly: The Pillars of Salah

The pillars of Salah are both actions and statements that make up the Salah. The Salah remains incomplete if any of these actions are missed even if they are not performed due to forgetfulness or ignorance. There total number is fourteen and they are:

1) To pray standing in the obligatory prayers if a person is physically capable of doing so. As for the supererogatory prayers, it is not obligatory to stand.

2) It is to say the opening Takbeer -*Allahu Akbar*- (Allah is great) at the beginning of the prayer

3) The recitation of al-Fatiha (The opening verses of the Quran)

4) Bowing

5) Stand straight after bowing

6) Prostration, which is performed by placing seven parts of the body on the ground. They are the forehead and nose (as one part), the palms, knees and feet.

7) Rising from prostration

8) Sitting between the two prostrations.

9) To perform each physical pillar in a state of tranquillity. (Not rushing)

10 & 11) The final sitting position and reciting the final Tashahhud. This is to

recite the following supplication before making the Salaam (salutation):

(التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّـهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّـهِ وَبَرَكَاتُه، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّـهِ الصَّالِحِينَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ).

12) To send salutations on the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) after the recitation of the final Tashahhud. This is done by reciting the following:

(اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ)

And it is better if one reads the full version, which is:

(اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمِ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمِ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمِ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ).

13) The concluding Salaam (salutation) which is done after the Tashahhud and salutations on the Prophet (peace be upon him); and it is to say:

(السَّلَامُ عَلَيكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ الله)

Peace and the mercy of Allah be upon you.

14) To perform these physical actions in their correct order as will be explained in more detail in the section on the description of the prayer.

Eighthly: The Sunnah actions of Salah

The Sunnah actions of Salah are a combination of physical and verbal actions that are commendable for the person who is performing the prayer. If these actions are performed they will incur a reward and if they are left out then the prayer is still is valid.

These commendable acts are split into the verbal and physical actions and we will start by looking at the physical actions first.

1) Raising the hands up to the shoulders or ears- when performing the opening Takbeer, when bowing, when standing straight after the bowing and upon getting up to perform the third unit of prayer.

2) Placing the palm of the right hand on the back of the left hand or wrist and placing both hands on the chest while standing. *(Please see illustration number six)*.

3) Looking at the place of prostration.

4) Holding the knees during bowing.

5) Keeping the back straight with the head parallel to it during bowing.

6) During the prostration to place the parts of the body firmly on the ground.

7) Keeping the upper arms away from the sides during the prostration so that the elbows do not touch the sides of the body; likewise the stomach should not touch the thighs and the thighs should not touch the calves.

8) Sitting in the Iftiraash position in between the two prostrations and in the first Tashahhud. The Iftiraash is performed by sitting on the ankle of the left foot, propping up the right foot and then placing both hands on the thighs. The right hand on the right thigh and left hand on the left thigh. *(Please see illustration number seven)*.

9) Sitting in the Tawarruk position in the final Tashahhud position. The Tawarruk position is achieved by placing the buttocks on the ground and placing the left leg under the thigh and shin of the right foot with the right foot propped up. *(Please see illustration number eight)*.

As regards the Sunnah (commendable) verbal actions, they include the following:

1) Reading an opening supplication quietly after the opening Takbeer and before the recitation of the Opening Chapter of the Quran. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would read various supplications including:

(سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ، وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ، وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ، وَلاَ إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ)

2) To seek refuge in Allah by reading *'Audho billahi minash shaytaanir rajeem'* before recitation of the Opening Chapter of the Quran.

3) To recite the Basmalah *(Bismillahir rahman nir raheem)* after seeking refuge in Allah.

4) To say 'Ameen' upon completing recitation of the 'Opening Chapter of the Quran'.

5) To recite a chapter or few verses of the Quran after the completion of the Opening Chapter in the first two units of every prayer.

6) To recite the Opening Chapter and a few verses of the Quran afterwards in an audible voice in the first two units of prayer in the Fajr, Maghrib and Isha and quietly in the Dhuhr and Asr prayers.

7) To recite the Takbeer (*Allahu Akbar*) when changing from one posture to another posture i.e. when one bows, gets up from bowing and when prostrating. However, the opening Takbeer is obligatory as we have previously mentioned.

8) To say the Tasbeeh *(Subhana Rabbi al-Azeem)* three times or more while bowing.

9) To say *'sami'a Allahuliman hamidah'* when standing up after bowing.

10) To say *'rabbana walakal hamd'* after reciting the statement in point nine above and it is preferred to add to '*mila samawatee wal ard, wa mila ma baynahuma, wa mila ma shi'ta min shayin ba'du'*.

11) To say the Tasbeeh *'subhan rabi al a'la'* three times or more while prostrating.

12) To say *'rabighfirlee, rabighfirlee'* between prostrations.

13) To perform the first Tashahhud after two units of prayer in the Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha salah.

14) To recite a closing supplication after the final Tashahhud and before the salutation. It should include seeking refuge from Hell, punishment of the grave, trials after death and the tribulations of the Antichrist.

15) To turn the head to the right and then left shoulder while reading the final salutation of the prayer.

Ninthly: The description of Salah

After explaining the statements and actions which form the pillars and Sunan (commendable) of Salah, it behoves us to mention the description of the prayer completely encompassing these pillars and Sunan as has been demonstrated to us by the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon us) in the authentic traditions. This is in conformity with the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Pray as you have seen me pray."[(1)]

Now, let us observe the Prophetic method of praying:

- The Prophet (peace be upon him) would face the Qiblah (direction of Mecca) and raise his hands to his shoulders or ears with the palms facing outwards.
- Then he would put the palm of his right hand on the back of his left hand and place them on his chest.
- Then he would make an opening supplication (as we described in the verbal Sunnah actions).

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim

- Then he would seek refuge in Allah and recite the Basmalah.

- Then he would recite the ‘Opening Chapter’ of the Quran and upon completion say *‘Ameen’*

- Then he would read a chapter of the Quran, sometimes a lengthy one and sometimes a short one or of a medium length; however in the Fajr prayer he would lengthen his recitation more than in other prayers. He would lengthen the first unit more than the second unit of prayer. He would also read audibly in the first two units of prayer in Fajr, Maghrib and Isha and quietly in Dhuhr and Asr.

- Then he would raise his hands as he raised them in the opening Takbeer and say ‘*Allahu Akbar*’ then bow. He would then place his fingers spread evenly on to his knees and hold them firmly; he would stretch out his back and make his head level to it, not above or below it. He would say ‘*Subhana Rabbi al-Azeem*’ one or more times.

- Then he would rise up from bowing saying; ‘*sami’a Allahu liman hamidah*’ and raise his hands as he did before bowing.

- Once he stood back up he would say; *‘rabbana wa lakal hamd’* Then he would say ‘*Allahu Akbar*’ without raising his hands before going down in prostration. He would prostrate on his forehead, nose, palms, knees and feet ensuring that his fingers and toes pointed towards the Qiblah. He would place his forehead and nose firmly on the ground and support this by his shoulders ensuring that his elbows did not touch the ground. He would then ensure that the stomach did not touch the thighs and the thighs did not touch the calves. He would then say; *‘subhan rabi al a’la’* one or more times.

- Then he would sit up from the prostration while saying; *‘Allahu Akbar’* and sit on the ankle of the left foot and prop the right foot up and then place both hands on the thighs and say; *‘rabighfirlee, rabighfirlee’* or *‘Allahumagh firlee warhamnee wajbirnee wahdinee wa’afinee warzuqnee.’*

- Then he would say; ‘*Allahu Akbar*’ and prostrate repeating in the second prostration the actions of the first one.

- Then he would say ‘*Allahu Akbar*’ and stand up by straightening both his feet as normal and place his weight on his hands and then stand upright again in order to start the second unit of prayer.

- Then once he has stood up he would start reciting and would complete the actions and postures of prayer as he did in the first unit, but instead of standing up straight after the second prostration he would sit up for the Tashahhud.

- In this posture he would sit in the Iftiraash position (as explained before) and place his right hand on his right thigh and his left hand on his left thigh. He would then join his thumb with his middle finger -forming a circle- and would point and look at his index finger. He would then start reciting the supplication for Tashahhud *'at-tahiyaatu lillahi was salawatu wat tayyibaat…'* until the end of the supplication.

- He would then stand up again and complete the third and fourth unit; making it brief by only reciting the 'Opening Chapter'.

- Then he would sit for the final Tashahhud position in the Tawarruk position in the way we explained earlier.

- Then he would recite the final Tashahhud and upon completion he would add the supplication of salutations on the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him).

(اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيم، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ).

- Then he would recite a closing supplication seeking refuge in Allah from Hell, the punishment of the grave, trials after death and the tribulations of the Antichrist. He would then supplicate for whatever he wished from the goodness in this world and the hereafter.

- Then he would make the concluding salutation by turning first to the right then the left shoulder and say; *'As Salaamu alaikum wa rahmat ullah'* each time.

- After concluding the salutation he would recite the following supplications:

  Astaghfirullah three times; then *Allahumma antas Salaam wa minkas Salaam tabarakta ya dhal jalilee wal ikraam.* Then he would read; *'La ilaha il lallaa wahdahu la shareek lahul mulk walahul hamd wa huwa ala kullin shayin qadeer.' La ilaha ill allah wala na'budoo ila iyyah lahu ni'mah wa lahul fadal wa lahu thana al hasan. La ilaha illa allah mukhliseena lahu deen wa law karihal kafiroon.'*

- Then he would recite *Subhan Allah, alhamdulilah* and *Allahu Akbar* thirty three times each making up ninety nine times; then he would recite once: *'La ilaha illa allah wahdahu la shareeka lah, lahul mulk wa lahul hamd wa huwa ala kullin shayin qadeer.'*

Tenthly: The nullifiers of Salah

If any of the following actions are committed, Salah will be nullified requiring the person praying to repeat their prayer.

1) Leaving out any of the conditions of Salah explained before without a valid excuse.

2) Leaving out any of the pillars of Salah irrespective of whether it has been left out intentionally or forgetfully and this will be explained in more detail in the chapter on Sajdat al-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness).

3) Eating or drinking intentionally.

4) Speaking intentionally.

5) Laughing.

6) Moving or fidgeting too much in actions that are not part of the prayer.

7) Intentionally adding a physical posture during the prayer such as adding a prostration of bowing.

Eleventhly: Prostration of Forgetfulness

It is required of a person praying to maintain full concentration and humility presenting themselves in front of Allah the Exalted their creator. They should reflect upon what they are reciting from the Quran during their prayer. Concentration is the soul of the prayer and its delight, as a prayer without concentration is like a body without a soul. Indeed, Allah the Exalted has praised those who concentrate in their prayers as He has said:

﴿ قَدۡ أَفۡلَحَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ١ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ فِي صَلَاتِهِمۡ خَٰشِعُونَ ﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their Salat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.” [23:1-2]

However, sometimes due to human nature a person may become distracted, forgetful or absent-minded, especially as Satan constantly tries to distract them by whispering to them or reminding them of worldly affairs. For this reason, a person may unintentionally perform an extra unit or leave one out and sometimes forget if they prayed extra or left out something. Consequently, Allah has permitted for a person who performs the above to conclude their prayer with two additional prostrations similar to the normal prostration in order to humiliate Satan, make up for any deficiency and to gratify the All-Merciful. This prostration is called the Prostration of Forgetfulness by the scholars and the following is a clarification of its ruling.

The Prostration of Forgetfulness is to be performed in three instances only, and they are:

i) Performing an extra action in the prayer.

ii) Leaving out an action in the prayer

iii) Doubting if one added or subtracted something from the prayer

- If the person performing the prayer adds an extra posture during the prayer such as a prostration, bowing, standing or sitting, then it becomes obligatory upon them to perform the Prostration of Forgetfulness; and if they realize the extra action during the prayer they should abandon that act immediately and continue their prayer, concluding it with the Prostration of Forgetfulness.

- If the person neglects something in the prayer out of forgetfulness, and this action is a pillar like the opening Takbeer, then their Salah will not be accepted and the Prostration of Forgetfulness will not suffice for them. Rather they will have to repeat the entire prayer again.

- If the action that has been left out is a pillar, other than the opening Takbeer, such as bowing or prostrating, then if the person remembers it before starting the next unit of prayer they should immediately perform it and complete the rest of the prayer concluding it with the Prostration of Forgetfulness. If they remember after starting the next unit of prayer then the previous unit of prayer – in which they forgot- will not count and they should repeat that unit and continue to the end of the prayer concluding it also with the Prostration of Forgetfulness.

- If a person does not remember missing a pillar until after they have completed their prayer, then they should stand up and complete one whole unit of prayer and conclude the prayer with the Prostration of Forgetfulness. This only applies to a person who has just completed their prayer or remembers within a very short span of time, however if they remember after a long time they will be required to repeat the whole prayer.

- If the missed posture is the first Tashahhud and the person has not fully stood up, then they should sit back down, complete the Tashahhud and continue their prayer, concluding it with the Prostration of Forgetfulness. If the person has stood up completely then it is disliked for them to sit back down, but if they sit down the prayer is valid. However if the person starts reading in the third unit then it becomes prohibited for them to sit back down.

- If a person is doubtful regarding the number of units they have prayed and whether it is two or three, then they should take the lower number of units and

continue their prayer based on this and conclude with the Prostration of Forgetfulness. If the person becomes certain of the number they have prayed then they should complete the units that are remaining and conclude with the Prostration of Forgetfulness.

- Note: It is permissible to perform the Prostration of Forgetfulness before the final salutation or after it.

Funeral Rulings

The wisdom of Allah the Exalted in this worldly life dictates that a person live and get older no matter what, for indeed his fate is to come to an end and expire. Thus Allah will take his soul and dirt will cover his body, truly he will find himself- at a time no one knows except Allah- standing before the Lord of Creation for judgment; then he will not find before him but what he has sent forward of words and actions.

Truly it is death which a person does not hear of it except his heart trembles, and it gives him goose bumps, afraid that it will come upon him unexpectedly, while he has not prepared himself for that, and while he did not count on it.

Due to this, indeed among the greatest afflictions is that a person forgets to remember death, and he distracts himself from it with panting and running behind enjoyments of the worldly life and its appetites. Jibreel (peace be upon him) one day came to the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and said:

"Oh Mohammed! Live how you will for indeed you are dying. And love who you wish for indeed you are leaving him. And work on what you wish for indeed you are earning through it."(1)

Remember, my fellow Muslim, this great hour, and that undoubtedly every person shall arrive at his hour, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ﴾

"Everyone shall taste death."[3:185]

So what have you prepared for the meeting with your Lord when

He asks you about your life and how you used it? About your youth and how you exhausted it? About what you know and whether you acted upon it? About your wealth, how you earned it and how you spent it? So have you prepared an answer to present for that day?

Do not think that your wealth will save you or that your status and authority will shield you from death, for in that moment whoever dies and has left behind him wealth and status is on an equal footing with he who dies and did not leave behind a single bill or coin; and in that hour he who dies alone is on equal footing with he who died surrounded by doctors, family, and close friends.

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(1) Transmitted by At-Tabarani in al-'Awsaṭ and al-Hakim.

So the Muslim ought to prepare constantly for the arrival of this great moment through increasing in righteous deeds, avoiding prohibited acts, and he ought to make of this worldly life a mere stopover for passing through to the hereafter. Thus he may be supplied with what will link him with the pleasure of Allah, His mercy, forgiveness and paradise.

Firstly: The state of the Muslim during sickness and his last breath

1) Indeed a person falling sick is a matter decreed by Allah and written for him. It is a test and a trial. So the Muslim should be content with the judgment of Allah, be patient upon his fate, and think well of his Lord, as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The affair of the believer is amazing- indeed his entire affair is good and that is not the case for anyone but the believer. If happiness comes over him, he is thankful, so it is good for him; and if adversity befalls him, he is patient, thus it is good for him".(1)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said:

"None of you should die except while thinking well of Allah the Exalted".(2)

2) It is not allowed for the Muslim to wish for death when a sickness intensifies or trials increase, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"None of you should wish for death from adversity befalling him, and if he must do something, then let him say: 'Oh Allah, keep me alive if living is better for me, and take my soul if death is better for me'."(3)

3) Whoever senses the approach of the moment of his death and has anything he wishes to inherit or owes anything to someone, then he must write a will due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"It is not right for a Muslim man who lives two nights and has anything he wishes to inherit except that he makes a written will and has it near him".(4)

4) When death approaches a sick person and he reaches the moment of his last breath, then those present among his family ought to remind him of the testimony of faith and instruct him to say, 'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' so that they are his last words in the worldly life when he leaves it, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

"Instruct your dying to say 'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah', for indeed he whose last words are 'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah' upon death will enter paradise one day, even if there may befall him before that whatever befalls him".[(1)]

5) When the soul passes and the proper authority is certain of it, they should close his eyes because the Prophet (peace be upon him), when he visited Abu Salamah and his gaze rose up, he shut them then said:

"Indeed when the soul is taken, the eyes follow it".[(2)]

6) Whoever is present with the deceased after his soul has departed he ought to supplicate for him due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Do not supplicate over yourselves except with what is good, for indeed the angels believe what you say". Then he said: **"Oh Allah forgive Abu Salamah, raise his status among those who are guided, grant him a successor among his offspring who remain, forgive us and him, Oh Lord of Creation, and make his grave spacious and illuminate it for him".**[(3)]

7) The family of the deceased should close his mouth and cover his body with something so that it is not exposed to onlookers. For if the deceased was in the state of Hajj or Umrah, then his head and face should not be covered, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him), regarding a man whose camel broke his neck:

"Wash him with water and Sidr, shroud his body in two garments, do not perfume him and do not cover his head for indeed he will be raised on the Day of Resurrection saying the Talbiyah, i.e. 'Here I am at Your service Oh Allah, here I am at your service. Here I am at Your service, You have no partner, here I am at your service. Indeed all praise, bounty, and sovereignty is Yours. You have no partner'."[(4)]

8) The family of the deceased ought to take the initiative and expedite settling the debt of the deceased if he has any from the wealth that he has left behind and before the distribution of the estate. If he did not have any wealth, it is allowed for someone to volunteer to settle his debt.

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(1) Transmitted by Ibn Hibban.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Secondly: Washing the Deceased

Washing the deceased is one among the several obligations upon the community such that when someone fulfills it, the rest are relieved of it. So it is obligatory upon the family of the deceased to take the initiative in washing him, shrouding him, and preparing him.

In the washing of the deceased the following rulings ought to be complied with:

1) A male Muslim, aware of the rules of washing, dependable and trustworthy should be put forward to wash him in order to cover what he sees on the body of the deceased of disliked matters like darkness in his face, the traces of a defect on his body, or things like that. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

"Whoever washes a Muslim, and keeps what he sees a secret, Allah will forgive him forty times".[(1)]

*The most appropriate person to wash a deceased man is the one he appointed in his will, then the father of the deceased, then his son, then the closest male relatives.

*If the deceased is female, the most appropriate person to wash her is whoever she appointed in her will, then her mother, then her daughter, then the closest female relatives.

*It is permissible for either of the spouses to wash the other due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Ā'ishah:

"Do not worry; if you die before me, then I will wash you…"[(2)]

And Asma bint Umays washed her husband, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq.[(3)]

It is permissible for either a woman or man to wash the deceased when it is a child under seven years old, whether it is male or female.

When the deceased is a man and there are only non-related women around, or a female among non-related men, and someone of the same gender or a close relative cannot be found, then the deceased is to be washed with pure dust or dirt [Tayammum]. Thus the one who will wash the deceased should strike his hands in the dust, then wipe the face and hands only of the deceased.

2) Remove the garments of the deceased upon washing him and place something over his privates, and perform the washing in a place that is shielded from the view of people.

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(1) Transmitted by At-Tabarani in al-Kabir, al-Hakim and al-Bayhaqi.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad and Ibn Majah, and an-Nasa'i in al-Kubra.
(3) Transmitted by Malik.

3) It is recommended for the one washing to soften the joints of the deceased if that is easy for him, and if not, then he does not have to if he is afraid it will break the limbs.

4) The one washing should raise the head of the deceased until he reaches a position close to sitting, and press the stomach gently in order to expel any waste that is in it.

5) The one washing should wash the privates of the deceased. He should wrap a cloth around his hand or put on a glove and scrub the privates with it, without touching them with his bare hand or looking at them.

6) After washing the privates of the deceased, the washer should say ‘in the Name of Allah’ and wash the deceased in the manner of the ritual ablution for the prayer, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the one who washed his daughter Zaynab:

“Begin with her right side and the places of ablution”.(1)

Avoid water entering the nose and mouth of the deceased, rather the washer should wrap his finger in a wet cloth and clean his teeth and nostrils.

7) The washer should put a little bit of lotus or soap in the washing water to wash the deceased, and then begin by washing his head and beard three times.

8) Then the body of the deceased should be washed beginning with the right side. So the washer should put the deceased on his left side and wash the right half of his body, front and back, and then move him over to his right side and wash the left half, front and back.

9) It is recommended that the washer repeat the washing of the body of the deceased three times, and he ought to add to that if necessary, even if it reaches seven times or more due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the one who washed his daughter:

“Wash her three, five, seven times or more than that if you see a need for it…”(2)

10) If something dirty comes out of the deceased after washing him, then clean the place where the filth came out.

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

11) It is a part of Prophetic tradition and therefore recommended for the washer to put in the last washing some camphor or pleasant scent due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the one who washed his daughter:

"Put in the last washing some camphor or something like it…"[1]

Camphor is a perfume that gives a cool sensation and its scent drives away insects.

As for when the deceased is in the state of pilgrimage to Makkah, then perfume is not applied to his body or shroud.

12) If the deceased is a man, then it is not recommended to comb his hair, trim his nails, shave his pubic hairs, or pluck his armpits; as for if it is a woman, then her hair is made into three braids and placed behind her back after the washing is finished.

13) If any waste comes out of the deceased after the washing is completed, some cotton can be stuffed where it came out. Then the deceased is washed as is done in the ritual ablution for the prayer. If anything comes out after shrouding him, then the washing is not repeated.

14) The still-born baby. It is the foetus that has dropped from the womb of its mother before it is completely formed- when it has not reached four months, or its physical characteristics cannot be fully distinguished. It is not washed or prayed over - as we will mention - and it is only wrapped in a cloth and buried. When the baby reaches four months or more, then it is washed and prayed over due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"As for the still-born- pray over him and ask for forgiveness and mercy for his parents".[2]

15) It is recommended and not an obligation for the one who washes the deceased to perform major ritual ablution afterwards due to the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying:

"Whoever washes a dead person then let him perform major ritual ablution".[3]

And in the words of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him): "We used to wash the dead, and there were those among us who performed major ritual ablution afterwards, and those of us who did not".[4]

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.
(3) Transmitted by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.
(4) Transmitted by Ad-Daraqutni.

Thirdly: Shrouding the Deceased

After washing the deceased and drying his body, it is obligatory to shroud him with something that will cover his whole body. The shrouding should be as following:

1) A man should be shrouded in three white, clean wrappings placed one above the other and between them a specific perfume called ‘Hanut’ should be placed.

As for a woman, then she should be wrapped in five garments: a garment to cover her lower body, a veil to cover her head, a shirt, and two wrappings for her entire body.

2) Place the deceased on top of the three wrappings lying down on his back.

3) Place perfumed cotton between the buttocks (the rear) of the deceased until an unpleasant smell does not come out. Place perfume on the rest of the body and the places of prostration.

4) Place the edge of the first wrapping on his right half, then the other edge on his left half, pull out the cloth that was used to cover his privates, then do the same thing you did with the first wrapping to the second one, and then likewise the third.

As for a woman, then first put her lower garment on her, then the shirt over it, then place the veil on her head and her neck, then wrap the two wrappings as is done with a man.

5) Tie the edges of the wrappings at the head and feet so that they do not come apart and tie up the rest of the shroud which is covering the body of the deceased with a ribbon to fix in place its edges.

Fourthly: The Prayer for the deceased

After finishing with shrouding the deceased, it is obligatory on the Muslims present to pray over him. The description of the funeral prayer is as follows:

1) Place the deceased on the ground pointed towards the direction of Makkah.

2) It is a Prophetic tradition and thus recommended for the prayer leader to stand near the head of the deceased if it is a man, and near the middle if the deceased is a woman. The head of the deceased should be on the right of the prayer leader. *(Please see illustration number nine and ten)*.

3) Those praying should line up behind the prayer leader, and it is allowed in narrow places for them to stand on the right and left of the prayer leader. It is recommended that those praying stand behind the prayer leader in three rows.

4) The prayer leader opens with declaring the greatness of Allah four times while standing and raising his hands upon each instance. Those praying behind him also declare the greatness of Allah.

The prayer leader and followers recite the first chapter of the Quran after declaring the greatness of Allah, and after seeking refuge in Allah from Satan and opening with the name of Allah.

After the second declaration of the greatness of Allah, they should send blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) by saying:

(اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ ، اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ).

'Oh Allah, send blessings upon Mohammed and upon the people of Mohammed, as you sent blessings upon Abraham and the people of Abraham, for indeed you are praiseworthy and glorious. Oh Allah, bless Mohammed and the people of Mohammed, as you blessed Abraham and the people of Abraham, for indeed you are praiseworthy and glorious'.

After the third declaration of the greatness of Allah, they should supplicate for the deceased by saying:

(اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا، وَمَيِّتِنَا، وَصَغِيرِنَا، وَكَبِيرِنَا، وَذَكَرِنَا، وَأُنْثَانَا، وَشَاهِدِنَا، وَغَائِبِنَا، اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ، وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنَا أَجْرَهُ، وَلَا تُضِلَّنَا بَعْدَهُ).

'Oh Allah, forgive our living and our dead, our young and our old, our males and our females, our attending and our absent. Oh Allah, whoever you grant life to among us, then grant him a life of faith, and whoever you cause to pass away among us, then cause him to pass away upon Islam. Oh Allah, do not deprive us of his reward and do not misguide us after him'.(1)

(اللهُمَّ، اغْفِرْ لَهُ وَارْحَمْهُ، وَعَافِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنْهُ، وَأَكْرِمْ نُزُلَهُ، وَوَسِّعْ مُدْخَلَهُ، وَاغْسِلْهُ بِالْمَاءِ وَالثَّلْجِ وَالْبَرَدِ، وَنَقِّهِ مِنَ الْخَطَايَا كَمَا نَقَّيْتَ الثَّوْبَ الْأَبْيَضَ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ، وَأَبْدِلْهُ دَارًا خَيْرًا مِنْ دَارِهِ، وَأَهْلًا خَيْرًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ، وَزَوْجًا خَيْرًا مِنْ زَوْجِهِ، وَأَدْخِلْهُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَأَعِذْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ، أَوْ مِنْ عَذَابِ النَّارِ).

'Oh Allah, forgive and have mercy on him purify him of sins and keep him safe from all harm, make his final resting place honourable and widen the place he is entering; wash his sins away as dirt is washed off a white garment with water,

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.

snow, and ice; exchange his abode, his people, and his spouse for better ones, enter him into paradise, and grant him refuge from the punishment of the grave or the Fire'.[1]

After the fourth declaration of the greatness of Allah, there is no supplication and the prayer leader sends the Islamic greeting on his right and on his left while it is also permissible to send the Islamic greeting only once. Those following behind the leader send greetings as well.

5) If someone following the prayer leader misses some of the declarations of the greatness of Allah in the funeral prayer, then he should follow the prayer leader in whatever he can catch of the declarations of the greatness of Allah, then after the fourth declaration he can complete what he missed and present whatever he missed of remembrance after it, then send greetings when possible before the funeral procession gets up to leave. If he is only able to make the declarations of the greatness of Allah without any remembrance in between them, and he sends greeting along with the leader, then there is nothing else he ought to do.

6) Whoever misses the prayer over the deceased along with the leader, it is permissible for him to pray over the grave. One should stand so that the grave is between himself and the direction of Makkah, and pray in the aforementioned manner.

Fifthly: The Funeral procession and burial

Transporting the deceased and burying him are among the communal obligations since its performance by some members of the community absolves the rest from the sin of not doing so. The burial of the deceased holds both a benefit for the deceased such he will not be subject to predators and scavengers, and for the living in that they will not be exposed to any harm on account of the smell of the dead after break down and decomposition.

The Muslim ought to comply with the following matters during the funeral procession:

1) Place the deceased in a coffin or carrying device after drying and shrouding him in order to make transporting him easier. Carry the coffin from four corners on the shoulders. It is permissible to conduct the funeral procession by car if the place of burial is far, in rainy conditions, or any other reasons that make it difficult to transport the deceased on the shoulders.

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

2) It is from the Prophetic tradition and thus recommended to rush the funeral procession due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Hurry with the funeral procession, for if the deeds of the deceased were righteous, then it best for you to deliver him towards his reward, and if they were other than that, then it is an evil you have set down from your necks".[(1)]

3) It is not legislated to raise the voice with remembrance or recitation of the Quran during the funeral procession, and it is not permissible to follow the funeral procession in a manner that opposes Islamic law whether raising the voice while crying or following it with incense or torches. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him): "…prohibited that the funeral procession be followed by a noisy mourner."[(2)] Also, Abu Musa al-Ashari advised, when death approached him: "Do not follow me with a censer". They to him: "Did you hear something about it?" He said: "Yes, from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)."[(3)]

If the time of the burial is at night, then it is permissible to use something to light the path during the procession and burial.

4) It is disliked for women to follow the funeral procession due to the statement of Umm Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her): "We were prohibited from following funeral processions, and at the same time we were not obligated to stay away from them."[(4)]

The following matters ought to be complied with at burials:

1) The deceased should not be buried at the three well-known prohibited times, except in the case of necessity, due to what was related by the Prophet (peace be upon him) about that. And these times are:

a) From sunrise until approximately 25 minutes afterwards.

b) When the sun is at the midpoint in the sky until it moves towards the West. It is 10 minutes before the call to prayer for Dhuhr.

c) When the sun inclines towards the West until sunset.

The above is due to the narration of Uqbah ibn Amir (may Allah be pleased with him), in which he said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) would prohibit us from praying or burying our dead at three times of the day: when the sun rises until it has risen completely; when it is directly overhead at midday until the sun passes the zenith; and when the sun inclines towards the West."[(5)]

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Ibn Majah.
(3) Transmitted by Ibn Majah.
(4) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by Muslim.

2) A Muslim should be buried in a cemetery for Muslims, and it is not permissible to bury him in a non-Muslim cemetery.

3) The grave should be made deep and wide in order to keep the deceased safe from scavengers reaching him, or his odour coming out. The Prophet ordered that when he (peace be upon him) said:

“Dig, make it wide and make it deep.”[1]

4) Make a niche in the wall of the grave to place the deceased in, and this is better than a simple trench on the bottom. If the dirt in the grave is hard, it will not collapse, and if it is soft it will collapse, so then the trench would be best.

The niche is a hole in the lower wall of the grave in the direction of the Qiblah just wide enough to put the deceased in. *(Please see illustration number eleven)*.

The trench is a hole down the middle of the grave length-wise, so that the grave is like a trough. Its sides are lined with bricks, either of adobe, clay or something similar. The deceased is placed in it and a roof of stones is made over it so that there is no contact with the deceased. *(Please see illustration number twelve)*.

5) Those who are given first priority for placing the deceased into the grave are: the one who was mentioned for the task in the last will and testament, then the closest relatives from his side of the family.

6) The Prophetic tradition states that the deceased should be lowered into the grave from the foot-end of the grave, and if that is not possible, then from the direction of the Qiblah.

7) Whoever lowers the deceased into the grave should say:

(بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ وَعَلَى مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّـهِ)

Bismillah wa ala milati rasuli llahi.

“In the name of Allah and upon the religion of the Messenger of Allah.”

8) The deceased should be placed on his right side in the grave, with his face pointing towards the direction of the Qiblah. His head should be to the right of the Qiblah and his feet to the left of it. He should be supported from behind with dirt so that he does not flip over onto his back. Nothing should be placed under his head.

9) After placing the deceased into the grave, untie the knots of the burial shroud that are near his head and feet, and do not uncover his face unless he was in the state of pilgrimage - as mentioned previously.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa’i and Ibn Majah.

10) After placing the deceased in the niche, tightly set together a row of bricks over the opening of the niche and fill up the spaces between the bricks with clay until no dirt can reach the deceased.

11) Pour dirt onto the grave. It is a Prophetic tradition to raise the level of the grave a hand's span above the ground in order to know that it is a grave. That is so it is respected and not mistreated. The mound of dirt over the grave should be in the shape of a camel's hump. Then small stones can be placed over it and they can be sprinkled with water.

12) Place at the head of the grave a stone in order for it to be recognized and distinguished from the others.

13) It is forbidden to put plaster or a structure over the grave, to sit down or to step on it due to the fact that the Prophet (peace be upon him): "Prohibited that a grave be plastered, sat on or built over."(1)

14) It is recommended for those who attend the burial to stop for a time near the grave after the funeral ends and supplicate for the deceased that he be forgiven and also to ask Allah to grant him firmness. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him): 'When he finished burying the deceased, he used to stop at it and say:

"Seek forgiveness for your brother and ask that he be granted firmness, for at this very moment he is being questioned".'(2)

Sixthly: Condolences

The purpose of condolences is to grant patience to the family of the deceased, comfort them and grant them some relief because of what has befallen them of misfortune, grief and distress through the loss of their loved one.

The following matters ought to be complied with when giving condolences:

1) Use words which comfort and console the one grieving, and which impart to him/her a sense of contentedness and confidence in Allah the Exalted, like saying:

(أَعْظَمَ اللهُ أَجْرَكَ، وَأَحْسَنَ عَزَاءَكَ، وَغَفَرَ لِمَيِّتِكَ).

A'dham allahu ajraka wa ahsana aza'aka wa ghafara li-mayyitika.

"May Allah increase your reward, extend your comfort and forgive your departed."

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, al-Hakim and al-Bayhaqi.

And there is also what was related on authority of the Prophet (peace be upon him) of his condolences to his own daughter:

(إِنَّ لِلَّـهِ مَا أَخَذَ، وَلَهُ مَا أَعْطَى، وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى، فَلْتَصْبِرْ، وَلْتَحْتَسِبْ).

Inna li-llahi ma akhadha, wa lahu ma a'ta, wa kullu shayin indahu ila ajalin musamma faltasbir waltahtasib.

"Indeed whatever Allah takes is His, and whatever He gives is His. And everything has an appointed time according to Him. So let her be patient and hope for the reward of that."(1)

2) There is no specific number of days for condolences, so it is permissible for a Muslim to offer condolences to his Muslim brother even after three days. This is because the goal of condolences is to lessen the distress and comfort the grieving until the sadness is gone completely. The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered condolences to the family of Ja'far even after three days.

3) It is a Prophetic tradition for the close relatives or their neighbours to prepare food for the household of the deceased to fill them up since the misfortune they have suffered distracts them from that. And the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Make food for the household of Ja'far, for there has come to them what preoccupies them."(2)

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

The Rulings of Fasting

Firstly: The definition Fasting

Fasting*:* It is to refrain completely from food, drink and sexual relations from true dawn to dusk with the intention of worshipping Allah the Exalted.

Secondly: The virtue of Fasting

1) Fasting is a protection from sins and the fire of Hell.

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

Allah's Apostle said, “Fasting is a shield so the person observing fasting should avoid sexual relations and should not behave foolishly and if somebody fights or abuses him, he should tell him twice, 'I am fasting.”[(1)]

And on the authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“Fasting is a protection and a strong fortress that keeps a person safe from the Fire.”

2) In Paradise there is a door called ‘Rayyan’ that only those who fast will enter.

Sahl Ibn Saad (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

In Paradise there is a gate called al-Rayyaan, through which only those who fast will enter on the Day of Resurrection and no one will enter through it except them when they have entered it will be locked, and no-one else will enter through it.”[(2)]

3) The person who fasts will be blessed with a special elation when he meets his Lord

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

The fasting person has two moments of elation: one when he breaks his fast and one when he meets his Lord and rejoices over his fasting.[(3)]

4) Fasting is an action that attracts immeasurable rewards for a Muslim

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(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“The reward of every deed of a person is multiplied from ten to seven hundred times. Allah says: `Except fasting as it is for me and I alone will give its reward.[1]

5) Fasting is a cause of forgiveness of sins

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“The five daily prayers, Friday prayer to the following Friday prayer, and Ramadan to the following Ramadan are expiations for sins as long as one abstains from major sins.”[2]

6) Fasting intercedes for those who fast on the Day of Judgment

On the authority of Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“The fast and the Quran are two intercessors for the servant of Allah on the Day of Resurrection. The fast will say, ‘O Lord, I prevented him from his food and desires during the day. Let me intercede for him.’ The Quran will say, ‘I prevented him from sleeping at night. Let me intercede for him.’ And their intercession will be accepted.”[3]

Thirdly: The ruling in regards to fasting in Ramadan

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is form of worship and pillar of Islam that Allah has obligated upon every Muslim without which a person’s Islam is not accepted. Allah the Exalted has stated:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ
تَتَّقُونَ ﴾

O You who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious and God-fearing [2:183]

On the authority of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“Islam has been built upon five things. Testifying that there is no deity but Allah, and that Mohammed is His Messenger; on performing five-daily prayers; on giving the poor due; on pilgrimage to the House; and on fasting during Ramadan.”[4]

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(4) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Fourthly: Establishing the start of Ramadan

Establishing the month of Ramadan can be done in the following two ways:

1) Sighting the crescent moon of Ramadan.

It is to sight the crescent moon of Ramadan on the 30th of Sha'baan. If it is seen then Ramadan has started and it becomes obligatory to fast as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ﴾

So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadân i.e. is present at his home), He must observe Saum (fasts) that month. [2:185]

2) The completion of thirty days of Sha'baan

This is when it is not possible to sight the crescent moon of Ramadan as we find in the Prophetic tradition on the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

"Observe fast on sighting it (the new moon) and break it on sighting it, but if the sky is cloudy and the moon is concealed from you then you should count thirty (days)."

Note: For Ramadan to start it suffices that one or two trustworthy people sight the moon.

Fifthly: The category of people that Fasting is obligatory upon

Fasting is obligatory upon all Muslims who have reached the age of puberty, sane, resident, capable and free from any Islamic dispensations.

Therefore, fasting is not obligatory upon non-Muslims, children, people who are insane or women in a state of menses or post-partum bleeding, and if they fast, their fasting will be incorrect and will not be accepted from them.

Fasting is also not obligatory upon children even if they have reached the age of seven, nor the traveler nor the sick or those who may become sick if they fast, but if they fast it will be correct and they will be rewarded.

Sixthly: The Pillars of Fasting

The pillars of fasting are as follows:

1) **Intention**

The fasting person should intend to perform the fast as a form of worship prescribed by Allah as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

“Verily actions are governed by their intentions.”(1)

The intention for fasting can be made in two ways:

a) **General Intention**

It is for the fasting person to make the intention to fast for the whole month in order to worship Allah once the month of Ramadan has been established.

b) **Specific Intention**

It is for the fasting person to make the intention to fast every night preceding the fast as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“Whoever does not intend to fast before Fajr then there is no fast for him.”(2)

2) To refrain completely from any of the actions that break the fast from true dawn to dusk as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ ٱلْخَيْطِ ٱلْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلصِّيَامَ إِلَى ٱلَّيْلِ﴾

And eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), Then complete your Saum (fast) till the nightfall. [2:187]

Refraining from the actions that break the fast starts at true dawn and ends at the setting of the sun.

Seventhly: Permissible reasons for not fasting during Ramadan

It is permissible not to fast during Ramadan for any of the following reasons:

1) Illness or old age

It is permissible for the sick person not to fast if they are suffering from an illness that they are expected to recover from soon. If this is the case then the person will have to make up for the days that did not fast as Allah the Exalted has said in the Quran:

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasa’ī and Ibn Mājah.

﴿فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ﴾

But if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskîn (poor person) (for everyday). [2:184]

Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"This is for the very old man or women who are unable to fast; they should feed one poor person for every day."[1]

The type of illness that makes it permissible for the person to not observe fast are those which are very difficult for a person to fast in, such as those that will cause a person's condition to deteriorate or lengthen their illness.

The illnesses that are permanent and not expected to be cured or a permanent inability to fast owing to causes such as old age require that a person feed one poor person for every day and they are not required to make up the fasts for those days missed.

The minimum amount of food required to be fed to poor people is half a *sa'a* of wheat, dates or rice or a similar grain that is available. The quantity of a *sa'a* is four medium sized double-handfuls of grain which equates to approximately two and a half kilos of rice. Therefore the required amount would be one and a quarter kilos of rice per day.

2) Travel

It is permissible for the traveller who meets the condition of shortening prayer not to fast, but they will be required to make up the fast at a later point as Allah has stated in the Quran:

﴿فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ﴾

But if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. [2:184]

The minimum distance of travel required to be regarded as a traveller who may shorten their prayer and break their fast is eighty kilometres.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

It is not permissible to break the fast if one is travelling for the purposes of sinning or in order to be excused from fasting.

It is better for the one who is travelling during the day to perform whatever is easier for them by either fasting or not fasting, if they choose to fast then their fast is correct and they are rewarded for it and do not need to fast another day.

On the authority of Anas Ibn Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"We used to travel with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and neither did the fasting person criticize those who were not fasting, nor did those who were not fasting criticize those who were fasting."(1)

However, if fasting is extremely difficult or may cause harm then it is preferable for the person not to fast as we find on the authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him who heard the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) say:

"It is not from piety to fast during travel."(2)

3) Menses and post-partum bleeding.

A woman who is in a state of menses or post-partum bleeding must not fast as it is forbidden upon her to do so and this is based on the prophetic tradition narrated on the authority of Abu Said al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"A woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses."(3)

And the woman is required to make up for the days that she missed as established from the narration of Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) who said: "We would have our menses and were ordered to make up for the fasts missed, but not for the prayers missed.

4) Pregnancy and breastfeeding

It is permissible for a woman who is pregnant or breastfeeding to not fast if she is worried for her own or her child's health deteriorating based on the narration of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) who stated that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Allah has waived half of the prayer for the traveller, and for the traveller, pregnant, and breastfeeding the fasting."(4)

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.
(4) Transmitted by Abu Dawud at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasa'ī and Ibn Mājah.

The pregnant or breastfeeding woman will be required to make up the fast at a later point if she feared for her own health, however if she feared for the health of her child, she must make up for her missed fast as well as feeding one poor person for every day that is missed based on the statement of Abdullah Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

“For the pregnant and breastfeeding if they are afraid [for their children] may not fast and may feed [the poor]”(1)

It is permissible for those who are employed in extremely tiring jobs to break their fast if it has become unbearable upon them to fast and the job that they are doing is critically required during the hours of sunlight.

Eighthly: The commendable acts of fasting and etiquette

It is commendable for the fasting person to perform the following:

1) **al-Suhoor (The pre-dawn meal)**

It is the meal that is eaten at the end of the night with the intention of fasting. It can either be a light or heavy meal and it suffices if even if one drinks a glass of water as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“Eating the Suhoor is blessed. Do not neglect it even if you take a sip of water, because Allah and His angels invoke blessings upon those who partake in the pre-dawn meal.”(2)

It is commendable to delay the pre-dawn meal until the end of the night just before dawn based on the narration of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) as narrated by Zaid Ibn Thabit:

“We ate the Suhoor with the Prophet (peace be upon him) then we got up to offer the Salah I asked “What was the time between the call to prayer) and the Suhoor?” He said: “(The time it would take) to recite fifty verses.”(3)

2) **Hastening the breaking of the fast.**

The breaking of the fast should occur immediately after the setting of the sun based on the Prophetic tradition:

“People will remain on the right path as long as they hasten the breaking of the fast.”(4)

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(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3) **Breaking the fast with fresh dates,** but if not available dried dates and to consume them in an odd number, three, five or seven. If these are not available then to break the fast with water as we find from the narration of Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"The Prophet used to break his fast before offering the prayer with some fresh dates, if he did not get any then dried dates and if nothing was available he would drink a few mouthfuls of water."(1)

4) **Increased invocations** at the time of breaking the fast and during it.

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Three categories of invocations are never rejected: The person who observes fasting until they break it, a just ruler and an oppressed person."(2)

And he would invoke with the following after breaking the fast:

(ذَهَبَ الظَّمأُ، وابتلَّتِ العُروقُ، وثبَتَ الأجرُ إن شاءَ اللّـهُ)

The thirst has gone and the veins are quenched and the reward is confirmed, if Allah so wills

5) **Increased obedience and worship**

A fasting person should give charity, read the Holy Quran, feed the fasting and do other forms of worship as Abdullah Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates: "The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him)

"The Prophet (peace be upon him) was the most generous person and he used to become more so particularly during the month of Ramadan as Jibreel used to meet him every night of the month of Ramadan till it elapsed. And the Messenger of Allah would go through the Qur'an with him. The Messenger of Allah was more generous with good things than the blowing wind." (3)

6) **Exerting oneself in prayers** during the night and praying the nightly Ramadan prayer known as Taraweeh based on the statement of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him)

"Anyone who prays in Ramadan motivated by belief and in expectation of the reward will be forgiven his past sins."(4)

7) **Performing Umrah** based on the statement of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him)

"Performing Umrah in Ramadan is equal to performing Hajj."(5)

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(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhī.
(2) Transmitted by at-Tirmidhī.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

8) **Good conduct** and exercising patience when harmed

This is based on the following Prophetic narration:

"When one of you is fasting, let him not behave in an obscene or foolish manner. If someone intends to fight against him or scold him, let him just say: I am fasting! I am fasting!"[(1)]

Ninthly: Actions that are allowed during the fast

The following actions are allowed during the fast:

1) Bathing during the day when in Ramadan.

"The Prophet used to pour water on his head while observing the fast because of thirst or due to the severity of the heat."[(2)]

2) Tasting food in case of necessity under the condition that food does not reach the throat.

3) Smelling and applying perfume on the condition that none of the particles reach the throat such as with the smoke of incense.

4) Intramuscular or intravenous injections that do not contain any nutrition.

5) Applying eye liner or eye drops

6) Using the miswaak

7) Taking a compulsory bath after dawn for those who had sexual intercourse with their wives and were unable to bathe before as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) would:

"Wake up after dawn in a state of impurity from sexual intercourse and would have a bath and keep his fast."[(3)]

The same would also apply to women who were in menses or post-partum bleeding and their bleeding stopped before the Fajr prayer.

8) Kissing one's spouse for the one who has control over their sexual desire because Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) was worried about his fast after he kissed his wife so the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"What do you think of rinsing the mouth with water while fasting?" I said: "There is nothing wrong with that. " The Prophet said: "Then what is the question about?" [(4)]

9) Rinsing the mouth and nose without exaggeration.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

Tenthly: The nullifiers of Fasting

The following actions nullify the fast:

1) To apostate from Islam because the unbeliever's worship is not accepted, rather all actions become vain as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ﴾

"If you join others In worship with Allah, (Then) surely (all) Your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers." [39:65]

2) Eating, drinking or using nutrient injections or any similar action intentionally, but if a person eats or drinks out of forgetfulness then the fast is still valid, however they must refrain from eating the moment they remember as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever forgetfully eats or drinks then he should complete his fast for what he has eaten or drunk has been given to him by Allah."(1)

3) To intentionally put something into the throat such as incense, smoke, or sneezewort irrespective of whether it is through the mouth or nose.

Inhalers or masks that are used by patients of Asthma nullify the fast if used during the days or Ramadan and a person who uses them is required to make up for those days if their usage was intermittent, however if they used them continuously and are unable to leave them, then they should only pay the compensation.

4) Breaking the intention of fasting and being determined to break it. Whoever intends to break the fast before the correct time then their fast is nullified even if the person did not eat or drink because they broke one of the pillars of fasting: the intention.

5) Being indecisive about breaking the fast because one should have a resolute intention to keep the fast.

6) Intentionally vomiting which means to vomit up food or drink from the stomach and out of the mouth irrespective of how it is done and whether it is a lot or little.

If a person vomits unintentionally such as owing to a sickness then the fast remains valid as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"If one has a sudden case of vomiting while fasting, no atonement is required, but if a person vomits intentionally they must atone for this missed day."(2)

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(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah.

7) The flowing of blood owing to menses or post-partum bleeding. If a woman sees blood emerge then her fast is immediately nullified even if it occurs moments before sunset.

8) The discharge of sperm deliberately through looking at something sexually exciting or fondling one’s spouse or touching one’s sexual organ because all of these actions bring gratification which is similar to sexual intercourse.

However, if a person discharges sperm without any sexual excitement owing to illness or the cold or in a state of sleep this will not nullify the fast.

9) Sexual intercourse: If a fasting person has sex intentionally then their fast is nullified irrespective of whether they ejaculate or not. They must make up for the fast and pay compensation. The compensation is free one slave, or fast two months continuously and if this is not possible they should feed sixty needy people.

Eleventh: The disliked actions while fasting

The following actions are disliked during fasting

1) Exaggerating in the rinsing of the mouth and nose during bathing and ablution out of fear that the water may be swallowed. The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

“Exaggerate when rinsing your nose unless you are fasting.”[1]

2) Kissing or playing with one’s spouse as this could cause excitement that may lead to the breaking of the fast.

3) Continuously looking at or thinking about things that can excite sexual desire as this sometimes causes ejaculation.

4) Tasting food when there is no necessity as this could break the fast if the food reaches the throat.

5) Delaying the breaking of the fast without necessity after its time has set in as this is an imitation of the Jews.

6) Leaving the pre-dawn meal as this could cause weakness which may result in one breaking the fast.

7) Continuous fasting for two days or more without consuming anything as this causes weakness.

8) Gathering saliva in one’s month and swallowing it or swallowing mucus as this is contrary to the wisdom of fasting.

(1) Transmitted by at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasa’ī and Ibn Mājah

9) Medicinal blood cupping which involves extracting blood from the body is disliked for those who may become weak if performed on them.

Twelfth: Zakat al-Fitr (al-Fitr alms)

Allah the Exalted has prescribed upon Muslims to pay the al-Fitr alms at the end of Ramadan in order to compensate for any shortcomings such as indecent acts or speech that were made during the devotion of Ramadan and at the same time it is a means of aid for the needy Muslims as narrated by Abdullah Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him):

"The Prophet of Allah enjoined Zakat al-Fitr on those who fast as atonement for any indecent act or speech, and for the purpose of providing food for the needy."(1)

Please find below the rulings in regards to al-Fitr alms

1) The ruling in regards to al-Fitr alms.

Zakat al-Fitr is obligatory upon all Muslims, male and female, young or old, free man or slave as we find on the authority of Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated:

"The Prophet (peace be upon him) made Zakat al-Fitr of one saa' of dates or barley obligatory on every slave, free man, male, female, young and old among the Muslims."(2)

It is obligatory upon a Muslim to pay al-Fitr alms on behalf of themselves and those that they are financially responsible for such as their spouse, children and relatives.

It is commendable for a person to pay the alms on behalf of an unborn child if the soul has been breathed into it.

2) The conditions that obligate al-Fitr alms

There are two conditions that must be met in order for al-Fitr alms to become obligatory upon a person:

a) They must be a Muslim as it is not obligatory upon non-Muslims

b) They must have enough provisions for themselves and their family to cover their needs on the day and night of Eid al-Fitr.

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(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and Ibn Mājah.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3) The quantity of al-Fitr alms and what should be given.

The obligatory minimum quantity that should be given for every Muslim person is one *saa'* of a staple foodstuff such as wheat, barley, dates, raisins, dried yoghurt, rice, corn or something similar.

The quantity of a *saa'* is four medium sized double-handfuls of grain which equates to approximately two and a half kilos of rice and the type of foodstuff should be taken into consideration depending on what is heavier or lighter than rice.

4) When should al-Fitr alms be paid?

Al-Fitr alms should be paid by every Muslim who was present before sunset on the last day of Ramadan and the best time to pay it is between the Fajr and Eid prayer. It is also permissible to pay it a day or two before Eid.

Whoever delays giving alms until after Eid must give it immediately before the sun sets on the day of Eid as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever gives it before the prayer will have it accepted as Zakat, while he who gives it after the prayer ir will be regarded as ordinary charity."(1)

Whoever delays giving the alms intentionally will fall into sin and it remains as a debt upon them which they must discharge.

5) Distribution of Zakat al-Fitr

Al-Fitr alms is distributed to the same categories of people that Zakat is distributed to, but it is better to give it to the poor and needy based on the narration of Abdullah Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) :

"The Prophet of Allah enjoined Zakat al-Fitr on those who fast as atonement for any indecent act or speech, and for the purpose of providing food for the needy."(2)

From this we understand that the poor and needy are preferred when paying the alms.

Thirteenth: Voluntary fasting:

Islam has permitted voluntary fasting and it is regarded as a non obligatory and highly commendable form of worship which the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) encouraged his nation to perform. It has a great reward and virtue and

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and Ibn Mājah.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and Ibn Mājah.

the following days are the most commendable:

1) Fasting Mondays and Thursdays:

On the authority of Abu Hurairah who narrates that Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“The deeds of people are presented to Allah every Monday and Thursday so I like that my actions are presented while I am fasting.”[(1)]

2) Fasting three days of every month: These are on the ‘White days’ which fall on the three days in the middle of the lunar month the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth.

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him):

My close friend [the Prophet (peace be upon him)] advised me to do three things: fasting three days of each month…”[(2)]

3) The Day of Ashoura: It is the tenth day of the month of Muharram

On the authority of Abu Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“For fasting the day of Ashoura, I hope that Allah will accept it as expiation [of sins] for the year that went before it.”[(3)]

And it is commendable for a Muslim to fast on both the ninth and tenth of Muharram based on the Prophetic statement:

“If I live until the next year, I will certainly fast on the ninth.”[(4)]

4) The Day of Arafah: It is the ninth day of Dhul Hijjah

On the authority of Abu Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“Fasting on the day of Arafah is an expiation [of sins] for two years, the year preceding it and the year following it.”[(5)]

5) The first nine days of Dhul Hijjah

It was narrated by some of wives of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he would fast the nine from Dhul Hijjah…”[(6)]

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasa’ī and Ibn Mājah.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by Muslim.
(6) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and an-Nasa’ī.

6) Six days of the month of Shawwal:

On the authority of Abu Ayyub (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrates:

The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadan and then follows it by fasting six days during the month of Shawwal will be rewarded as if he had fasted the entire year.[1]

7) Fasting alternate days

On the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-Aas (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrates:

Allah's Apostle (peace be upon him) said to me: "The most beloved fasting to Allah is the fasting of the Prophet David, who used to fast alternate days".[2]

8) Most of the days in Shabaan

On the authority of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who narrates:

"The Prophet never fasted in any month more than in the month of Sha'ban for he would fast the whole month of Shabaan and he would say, "Do those deeds which you can do easily, as Allah will not get tired (of rewarding) till you get bored and tired."[3]

And in one narration: **"He would fast all of Shabaan except for a few days."[4]**

9) The Month of Muharram

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The best days for fasting after Ramadan are in the month of Allah Muharram."[5]

Fourteenth: The days which are disliked to fast on

It is disliked to fast on the following days:

1) Singling out Fridays for fasting

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"None of you should fast on Friday except that he should fast a day before or after it."[6]

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by Muslim.
(6) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2) Singling out Saturdays for fasting

On the authority of Yazid Ibn Samaa (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Do not fast on Saturdays unless it is an obligatory fast. If you found nothing (to eat or drink) except the bark of a grape or a tree stick chew it."[1]

3) Fasting on the Day of Doubt: It is the day that follows the twenty ninth of Shabaan if the crescent moon of Ramadan has not been sighted. However, if a Muslim is in the habit of fasting alternate days and it falls on that day then it would be permissible.

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"Do not observe fasting for a day or two days preceding Ramadan, however, if a person is in the habit of fasting on a particular day he may fast on that day. " [2]

4) Fasting all year round: It is to fast everyday of the year without leaving any days for not fasting.

On the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"He who fasts the whole year does not fast."[3]

5) Fasting uninterruptedly: It is to fast continuously for more than a day without eating or drinking in between days. It is only permitted for one to fast until the pre-dawn meal of the next fast as we find from the narration of Abu Said al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) who heard the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) say:

"Do not fast continuously. If one of you wants to fast continuously, he should only go on until the time of the pre-dawn meal." They said, "But you fast continuously, O Apostle of Allah.' He said, "My condition is not like yours, in the night I have someone who feeds me and gives me to drink."[4]

Fifteenth: The days which are forbidden to fast on

It is forbidden to fast on the following days:

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhī, an-Nasa'ī and Ibn Mājah.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

1) The Day of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha

On the authority of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"On these two days Allah's Apostle has forbidden you to fast for one of them is the day of breaking your fast, and the other you duly eat from the meat of your sacrifice."(1)

2) The Three days of Tashreeq: These are the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth of Dhul Hijjah which are the days after Eid al-Adha and this is based on the narration of Nubaisha al Hudhali that the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) said:

"The days of Tashreeq are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allah."(2)

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

The Rulings of the Major and Minor Pilgrimage

The major pilgrimage, or Hajj, is one of the five pillars of Islam and one of the great obligations, which if rejected, renders a person's Islam unsound. On authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: 'The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) addressed us and said:

"Oh people! Allah has made the major pilgrimage an obligation for you, so perform the pilgrimage."(1)

Allah has joined the major and minor pilgrimage together and commanded their performance, for He the Glorified said:

﴿ وَأَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلْحَجَّ وَٱلْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ﴾

"And perform properly (i.e. all the ceremonies according to the ways of Prophet Mohammed), the Hajj and Umrah (i.e. the pilgrimage to Makkah) for Allah."[2:196]

Just as the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged to follow up the major pilgrimage with the minor and vice-versa:

"Follow the major pilgrimage with the minor and vice-versa. For indeed they ward off poverty and sins just as bellows cast off the slag of iron, gold and silver."(2)

And also on authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"From one minor pilgrimage to another is expiation for what is committed between them. And the major pilgrimage which was accepted by Allah does not have any reward except paradise."(3)

Firstly: The Definition of the Major and Minor Pilgrimage

The major pilgrimage, or Hajj, is to visit the Holy House of Allah in the specified months in order to circumambulate the Ka`bah [*Ṭawaf*], rush between the two mountains [*Sai*] and stop at mount Arafah.

The minor pilgrimage, or *Umrah*, is to visit the Holy House of Allah in order to circumambulate the Ka`bah [*Ṭawaf*] and go back and forth between the two mountains [*Sai*].

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(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi and an-Nasa'i.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Secondly: The obligatory conditions of the Major and Minor Pilgrimage

1) Islam: the major pilgrimage is not obligatory for a polytheist, disbeliever or apostate from Islam, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ ٱلْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَـٰذَا﴾

"Verily, the Mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, and in the Message of Mohammed SAW) are Najasun (impure). So let them not come near Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah) after this year…"[9:28]

2) Sanity: the major pilgrimage is not obligatory for the mentally insane due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) :

"The pen is lifted from three people: the sleeping person until he awakens; the child until he reaches puberty; and the mentally insane until he regains his sanity."(1)

3) Adulthood: the major pilgrimage is not obligatory on the young who have not reached puberty, however if they perform the major pilgrimage then it is acceptable as long as a guardian formulates the intention for them. This is due to what was related on authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him):

'The Prophet (peace be upon him) encountered a caravan in ar-Rawha'(2), so he said: **"Who are these people?"** They said: 'Muslims. Who are you?' He said: **"The Messenger of Allah."** Then a woman raised up to him a small child and said: 'Does the major pilgrimage count for this one?' He replied: **"Yes, and you have the reward."**(3)

The only thing is that it does not count for him towards the major pilgrimage which is required for him in Islam, due to what was related on authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Whichever small child performs the major pilgrimage, then reaches the age of responsibility for sins, then he must perform another major pilgrimage."(4)

4) Ability: one must have the ability to perform the major pilgrimage due to the statement of Allah the Exalted:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ حِجُّ ٱلْبَيْتِ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا﴾

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.
(2) A place three to four miles from Medina, on the way to Mecca.
(3) Transmitted by Muslim.
(4) Transmitted by At-Tabarani, Ibn Khuzaymah, al-Hakim and al-Bayhaqi.

"And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka'bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses (for one's conveyance, provision and residence)…"[3:97]

What is intended by the word 'ability' is having the ability to obtain the supplies, means of transportation, and expenses for the period between departure and returning, and the additional finances needed for one's family and those whose expenses one is required to provide for from the time of departure until returning home.

- Part of 'ability' is also to have the physical ability to perform the major pilgrimage. Thus the body should be healthy from sicknesses and disabilities which would impede performance of the major pilgrimage. Examples of impediments are advanced old age, being afflicted with a disability that prevents a person from being able to remain seated during travel or a disability which prevents a person from being able to tolerate the hardships of the journey.

- Part of 'ability' is also that the route for the major pilgrimage should be safe and secure in terms of a person's life and belongings.

5) The presence of a close male relative: this condition is specific to women. Thus it is stipulated for them that if they wish to make the journey of the major or minor pilgrimage then her husband or a legally acceptable close male relative must accompany her. A 'close male relative' is defined as: an adult male who is free of mental defect and is not ever permitted for her to marry, due to the narration of Ibn Umar, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"A woman should not travel except with a close male relative."(1)

- Some of the people of knowledge adopted the view that it is permissible for a woman who cannot find a close male relative to perform the major pilgrimage. And this is only for when she is in a trustworthy group of women or righteous men, and specifically for the obligatory major pilgrimage and not a supererogatory pilgrimage.

6) Outside of the waiting period for a divorce: also stipulated for women is that they not be in the midst of a waiting period for divorce or as a widow in the potential timeframe they will be travelling for the major pilgrimage, due to the statement of Allah the Exalted:

﴿لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنۢ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِينَ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ﴾

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhari and Muslim

"…and turn them not out of their (husband's) homes, nor shall they (themselves) leave, except in case they are guilty of some open illegal sexual intercourse."[65:1]

A Description of the performance of the Minor Pilgrimage

When a Muslim wants to perform the minor pilgrimage, then he must complete the following actions:

1) Proceed to one of the points of assembly around Mecca which the Prophet (peace be upon him) has designated and made for each direction. There are five assembly points:

a) *Dhul-Hulayfah*: it is the assembly point of the residents of Medina and anyone who passes by it that is not a resident. Today it is called: *'Ābar Ali*.

b) *Al-Juhfah*: it is the assembly point of the residents of the Levant and whoever arrives from its surrounding areas like Egypt and North Africa. Today it is prohibited to perform the major pilgrimage from Rabigh, which is before al-Juhfah towards the direction of the sea.

c) *Qarn al-Manazil*: it is the assembly point of the residents of Najd and whoever arrives from its surrounding areas. Today it is called: *as-Sayl al-Kabir*.

d) *Yalamlam*: it is the assembly point of the residents of Yemen, the coast and India; it is located to the south of Mecca and today is called: *as-Sadiyah*.

e) *Dhat Irq*: it is the assembly point of the residents of Iraq and the rest of the residents of the East. Today it is called: *ad-Ḍaribah*.

Thus it is not permitted to set out for Mecca to perform the major or minor pilgrimages and to pass these assembly points without assuming the ritual pilgrimage garment, or *'Ihram*. It does not matter if the person who passes them is a resident or not.

- For the residents of Mecca and those whose homes are beyond these assembly points, like the area of Qadid Valley, Usfan, Marr aẓ-Ẓahran or Jeddah, their assembly point is their homes due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) :

"And for everyone else, then it is wherever he begins from, so that the residents of Mecca begin from Mecca."[1]

2) When the one performing the minor pilgrimage reaches the assembly point any sewn garments should be removed, he should remove the hair from his pubic region and armpits, make major ritual ablution, and perfume his head, beard and

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

body. There is no harm in some of the perfume remaining after putting on the ritual garment, or *'Ihram*, however one should avoid directly perfuming the garment itself.

Women should make major ritual ablution even if menstruating or experiencing post-partum bleeding, except they do not put on any perfume.

3) After finishing with the major ritual ablution and applying perfume, the ritual garment, or *'Ihram*, should be put on. For men it consists of a lower garment wrapped around the lower half of the body and an upper garment place on the upper half of the body. It is stipulated that they both be without any sewn edges. For women, then they can dress in whatever garments they wish that are not ostentatious in design and they should avoid covering their faces and hands, unless they fear some kind of difficulty, then it would be permitted to cover their faces however without wearing a full veil, or *Niqab*.

4) After putting on the ritual garment, the one performing the minor pilgrimage should pray in the area of the assembly point if it is time for an obligatory prayer, otherwise he should pray two units of voluntary prayer and put on the ritual garment after that.

5) After finishing the prayer, the one who has put on the ritual garment for the minor pilgrimage should get on his means of transportation while saying:

(لَبَّيْكَ عُمْرَةً)

'Here I am, at Your service for the minor pilgrimage.'

Then respond saying:

(لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ، لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ)

'Here I am at Your service, oh Allah, here I am. Here I am at Your service, You have no partner, here I am at Your service. Truly all praise and blessings are due to You, and sovereignty. You have no partner.'

Men should raise their voices saying that while women should say it just enough so that only they can hear it themselves. At this point a Muslim has put on the ritual garment which is the first of the pillars of the minor pilgrimage.

6) If the one who had put on the ritual garment fears some obstacle might impede him or obstruction might prevent him from completing his minor pilgrimage and its rites, it is permitted for him to stipulate - after the ritual response, or *Talbiyah* - by saying:

(إِنْ حَبَسَنِي حَابِسٌ فَمَحِلِّي حَيْثُ حَبَسْتَنِي)

'If an obstacle detains me, then my point of detachment is where You detain me.'

Thus when some obstacle detains him or an obstruction prevents him from completing the rites, it is permitted for him to exit from the ritual state of pilgrimage and there is nothing he has to do to make up for that.

It is required for the one in the ritual state of the pilgrimage to say the ritual response, or *Talbiyah*, a great deal while on the way to Mecca and he stops doing so when he begins circumambulating the Ka'bah.

7) When the one performing the minor pilgrimage reaches Mecca it is recommended for him to make major ritual ablution before entering the city and to make minor ritual ablution for the circumambulation of the Ka`bah. When he enters the Holy Mosque he should enter with his right foot first and say:

(بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ، وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّـهِ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي وَافْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ، أَعُوذُ بِاللَّـهِ العَظِيمِ، وَبِوَجْهِهِ الكَرِيمِ، وَبِسُلْطَانِهِ القَدِيمِ، مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ).

'In the name of Allah, and may prayers and blessings be upon the messenger of Allah. Oh Allah. Forgive me for my sins and open the gates of Your Mercy for me. I seek refuge in Allah the Almighty, His Noble Face and His Eternal Authority, from the accursed Satan.'

8) After that, the one performing the minor pilgrimage should turn towards the Black Stone and touch it with his right hand and kiss it. If it is not feasible for him to kiss it, he should touch it and kiss his hand. And if it is not feasible for him to touch it, then he should face the Stone and gesture towards it with his hand saying:

(بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ وَاللَّـهُ أَكْبَرُ)

'In the name of Allah, and Allah is great.'

Then he should stand so the Black Stone and the Ka`bah are on his left and begin circumambulating the Ka`bah seven times, starting from the Black Stone. This circumambulation is the second of the pillars of the minor pilgrimage. *(Please see illustration number thirteen)*.

The circuits of circumambulation begin and end at the Black Stone.

One should make seven circuits like that.

9) It is recommended for men making the minor pilgrimage at the beginning of the circumambulation to wear their upper garment a certain way called *Idtiba*. It is when a person uncovers his right shoulder and puts the middle of his upper

garment under his right armpit, and the other edge over his left shoulder. Then when he finishes the seventh circuit, he returns the upper garment to its state before specially arranging it. *(Please see illustration number fourteen)*.

10) It is recommended for men making the minor pilgrimage to also hurry in the first three circuits so that he walks quickly while keeping the steps close together, and to walk the remaining four circuits normally.

11) It is required for the one making the minor pilgrimage to avoid circumambulating inside the semi-circular enclosure, or *Hijr*, which is the curve built in front of the Ka`bah, on the side where the drain for the roof is located. This is because it is considered part of the Ka`bah and whoever passes between it and the Ka`bah has not completely circumambulated the Ka`bah.

12) When the one making the minor pilgrimage reaches Yemeni corner while circumambulating, which is the corner that is right before the Black Stone, then it is recommended for him to take hold of it without kissing it. If one is not able to do so because of a large crowd, then one should simply walk by it and not kiss it or gesture towards it.

13) When the one making the minor pilgrimage is between the Yemeni corner and the Black Stone while circumambulating, he should say:

﴿رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا حَسَنَةٗ وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ حَسَنَةٗ وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴾

"And of them there are some who say: 'Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!'"[2:201]

14) When one reaches the Black Stone, he should touch it and kiss it in accordance with what is feasible for him, and say:

(بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ وَاللَّـهُ أَكْبَرُ)

'In the name of Allah, and Allah is great.'

Then he should begin the second circuit and perform it exactly as he did the first one until finishing with the seventh circuit.

15) During the circumambulation, the one making the minor pilgrimage should mention Allah the Exalted and supplicate to Him however he wishes. One should recite the Quran and avoid small talk or discussing worldly matters.

16) It is obligatory for the one making the minor pilgrimage to perform the circuits of circumambulation in succession and not separate them with anything. For if one separates them with something - other than with prayer - and it is a long

separation, it is obligatory for him to repeat the circumambulation from the beginning.

It is obligatory for the one making the minor pilgrimage to preserve his state of ritual ablution during the course of the circumambulation. If he loses his state of ritual ablution during circumambulation, it is obligatory for him to perform ritual ablution. If the amount of time he requires to perform the ritual ablution is short, he can complete the circumambulation from where he left off.

17) Those who are menstruating or experiencing post-partum bleeding should avoid circumambulating the Ka`bah, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to a woman who was menstruating:

"Perform the major pilgrimage just as I do except do not circumambulate the House until you are pure."[1]

Thus she should delay her circumambulation until the time she is pure.

18) When the one making the minor pilgrimage completes his seventh circuit, he should face the Station of Abraham, the structure standing in front of the Ka`bah, and recite the verse:

﴿وَٱتَّخِذُواْ مِن مَّقَامِ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمَ مُصَلًّىۖ﴾

"And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim (Abraham) [or the stone on which Ibrahim (Abraham) stood while he was building the Ka'bah] as a place of prayers…"[2:125]

Then one should pray two units of prayer behind the Station if it is feasible, otherwise perform the two units of prayer anywhere in the Holy Sanctuary, while reciting in the first unit of prayer the Opening Chapter and the Chapter called 'The Disbelievers' completely. And in the second unit of prayer, one should recite the Opening Chapter and the Chapter called 'The Sincerity' completely.

19) When finished with the prayer, one should return to the Black Stone and touch it if it is feasible to do so.

20) After that, the one making the minor pilgrimage should leave to perform rite of going back and forth between as-Safa and al-Marwah seven times. This is the third of the pillars of the minor pilgrimage. So one should begin at as-Safa and when approaching it, recite:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلصَّفَا وَٱلۡمَرۡوَةَ مِن شَعَآئِرِ ٱللَّهِۖ فَمَنۡ حَجَّ ٱلۡبَيۡتَ أَوِ ٱعۡتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَاۚ وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيۡرٗا فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

"Verily! as-Safa and al-Marwah (two mountains in Makkah) are of the Symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who perform Hajj or 'Umrah (pilgrimage) of the House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) to perform the going (Tawaf) between them (as-Safa and al-Marwah). And whoever does good voluntarily, then verily, Allah is All-Recogniser, All-Knower."[2:158]

Then one should go up onto as-Safa, face the Ka`bah, raise the hands, declare Allah's greatness and say:

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ، أَنْجَزَ وَعْدَهُ، وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ، وَهَزَمَ الْأَحْزَابَ وَحْدَهُ).

'There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, without partner. His is the kingdom and all praise and He is over all things competent. There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, He fulfilled His promise, helped His slave and defeated the Confederates alone.'

This supplication should be repeated three times and then a person can supplicate with whatever he pleases.

21) After completing the supplications, one descends from as-Safa heading towards al-Marwah walking. When he reaches the green signposts, he should run as quickly as he is able to. Women should not run. When he reaches the second sign, he should resume walking until he reaches al-Marwah. During the rite of going back and forth, he should supplicate, mention Allah and recite the Quran.

22) When the one making the minor pilgrimage reaches al-Marwah, he should go up it, race the direction of the Ka`bah, declare Allah's greatness, raise his hands in supplication, and say exactly what he said on as-Safa. With that, he will have completed the first circuit.

23) After that, he should descend al-Marwah heading towards as-Safa, and walk in the area for walking, and run when he reaches the green signposts until he reaches as-Safa. With that, he will have completed the second circuit. He should do what he did in the first circuit, and repeat this until he has completed seven circuits beginning with as-Safa and finishing his last one at al-Marwah so that his departure from as-Safa to al-Marwah is a circuit, and his return from al-Marwah to as-Safa is a circuit.

24) After finishing with the seven circuits of going back and forth between as-Safa and al-Marwah, the one making the minor pilgrimage should shave his head or trim it by cutting something from every part of his hair, if a man. As for a woman, then she does not do anything except trim her hair, thus she should make her hair into two halves and cut from each half as much as a fingertip.

Shaving is better than trimming for a man since the Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated for those who shaved three times and for those who only trimmed one time.

When the time of the major pilgrimage is near and a person wishes to perform the minor pilgrimage beforehand, then it is recommended for him to trim his hair just until the point he would be able to shave it for the major pilgrimage.

25) After shaving or trimming the hair, the one making the minor pilgrimage has completed the rites and acts of the minor pilgrimage. So he can remove the ritual garments, dress in his sewn clothing, perfume himself, and do everything that was prohibited for him to do during the ritual state of pilgrimage, like wear perfume, be intimate with women and trim his hair or fingernails.

A Description of the performance of the Major Pilgrimage

Firstly: The types of rites in the Major Pilgrimage

There are three ways for performing the major pilgrimage, and each path is called a 'rite'. They are:

A) The Isolated Pilgrimage: It is to intend to perform the major pilgrimage by entering the ritual state for the major pilgrimage only and to say upon entering the ritual state:

(لَبَّيْكَ حَجًّا)

'Here I am at Your service for the major pilgrimage.'

And this rite is not preceded by the performance of the minor pilgrimage before it, and it is not required to make an intention to slaughter the sacrificial animal at the end of his major pilgrimage.

B) The Coupled Pilgrimage: It is when the pilgrim combines in his intention for entering the ritual state of pilgrimage to perform the major and minor pilgrimage together. So at the time of entering the state of pilgrimage:

(لَبَّيْكَ حَجًّا وَعُمْرَةً)

The pilgrim performs the rites of the minor pilgrimage as described previously, except he does not cut his hair at all or remove his ritual garments. He only remains in his ritual garments until he completes the acts of the major pilgrimage, and at the end he is required to slaughter the offering.

C) The Relaxed Pilgrimage: It is when the pilgrim enters the ritual state of pilgrimage with the intention to perform the minor pilgrimage in the month of the major pilgrimage, then exits that state completely, and re-enters the state of pilgrimage after that with the intention to perform the major pilgrimage in the eighth day of the month Dhul-Hijjah. This is under the condition that he does not leave Mecca and return to his homeland, otherwise his 'relaxed pilgrimage' ends, and it is required for him to perform another minor pilgrimage.

The best of the three rites is the 'relaxed pilgrimage' due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) :

"If what I am thinking had occurred to me before now, I would not have brought the sacrifice, and I would have exited from the ritual state of pilgrimage along with the people when they exited."[1]

Secondly: The acts of the Major Pilgrimage on the eighth day of the month Dhul-Hijjah (The Day of Quenching Thirst)

1) When the pilgrim performs his minor pilgrimage and the eighth day of Dhul-Hijjah arrives, if his pilgrimage is a 'coupled' one, then he should remain in his state of pilgrimage after performing the minor pilgrimage and not exit from it; if his pilgrimage is a 'relaxed' one, then he should enter the state of pilgrimage from wherever he is at after performing major ablution, cutting his pubic and armpit hairs, putting on perfume, put on the ritual garments, and say:

(لَبَّيْكَ حَجًّا)

And if he is afraid that some obstacle will prevent him from completing his major pilgrimage, then he should set it as a condition and say:

(وَإِن حَبَسَني حَابِسٌ فَمَحِلِّي حَيْثُ حَبَسْتَني)

If his pilgrimage is an 'isolated' one then he should enter the state of the major pilgrimage from one of the assembly points since he is not on the minor pilgrimage.

2) Then after entering the state of pilgrimage, the pilgrim should go to Mina in the late morning and pray the early afternoon, later afternoon, sunset and evening prayers there. He should pray each at their exact time and reduce the four-unit prayers to just two units each.

3) The pilgrim should remain in Mina until the morning of the day of Arafah. It is sufficient if he spends the majority of the night at Mina.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Thirdly: The acts of the Major Pilgrimage on the ninth day of Dhul-Hijjah (The Day of Arafah)

1) When the sun rises on the ninth day, or the day of Arafah, the pilgrim moves from Mina to Arafah. Then he settles in Namirah and remains there until just past noontime if it is feasible to do so.

The stop in Arafah is the second of the pillars of the major pilgrimage after entering the state of pilgrimage or putting on the ritual garments. It is also the greatest pillar due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"The major pilgrimage is Arafah. So whoever arrives at Muzdalifah the night before the morning prayer has completed his major pilgrimage."[1]

So whoever misses this pillar has missed the major pilgrimage.

2) After the sun passes its zenith, the pilgrim should pray the early and late afternoon prayer combined and shortened. These prayers are combined by offering one call to prayer (Adhan) and two calls for establishing the prayer (Iqamah).

3) After finishing the prayer, the pilgrim should visit Arafah and stay there until sunset. He should pray, mention Allah and implore Him earnestly with supplications while raising his hands facing the direction of the Ka`bah. He should say frequently:

(لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

It is permitted for the pilgrim to take a rest by sleeping, speak to his friends about something of benefit, or recite beneficial books.

4) When the sun sets on the ninth day, the pilgrim moves to Muzdalifah. When the time of the sunset and evening prayers arrives, he should combine them and shorten them, also giving one call to prayer and two calls for establishing them. He should not pray the sunset and evening prayers before reaching Muzdalifah unless he is afraid the time for the evening prayer will pass before he reaches there due to the large number of people.

The pilgrim should not be preoccupied with gathering stones as soon as he reaches Muzdalifah, rather he should be preoccupied with performing the prayer, and he can gather stones from anywhere.

5) The pilgrim stays the night in Muzdalifah and remains there until the morning prayer. The one staying there does not have to sleep, rather the condition is fulfilled with simply staying at Muzdalifah.

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.

It is permitted for those who have a legitimate excuse, like the elderly, disabled, and the sick upon whom crowds cause difficulty, to depart from Muzdalifah after midnight. It is also permitted for those accompanying them to depart with them. Those who do not have a legitimate excuse must remain until the morning prayer.

Fourthly: The acts of the Major Pilgrimage on the tenth day (The Day of Sacrifice)

1) When the pilgrim prays the morning prayer on the tenth day, he heads towards a certain valley or mountain of Muzdalifah called the Mash`ar. Then he should supplicate to and declare the greatness of Allah until the time for travelling which is when the daylight becomes plain in the sky, before sunrise. If it is not feasible for him to go to the Mash`ar, he should mention Allah and supplicate to Allah wherever he is.

2) When the morning light shines brightly, the pilgrim should set out for Mina before the sun rises. When he passes by the valley of Muhassir - between Muzdalifah and Mina - he should hasten his stride since that valley is the one in which Allah destroyed Abrahah the Ethiopian and his army when they intended to destroy the Ka`bah.

The pilgrim ought to gather stones for the stoning ritual wherever he can.

3) When the pilgrim reaches Mina, he should face the Pillar of Aqabah, which is the last pillar and closest to Mecca, and he should throw seven stones at it. The stones should be the size of a chickpea or fava bean. He should throw the stones one after the other successively, declaring the greatness of Allah with each stone.

4) When the pilgrim finishes stoning the pillar of Aqabah, he should slaughter his offering, if performing a ‘relaxed’ or ‘coupled’ pilgrimage. If it was an ‘isolated’ pilgrimage, then he is not required to sacrifice an offering. The best thing to do is sacrifice the offering himself. If he is not able to, it is permitted to delegate the task to someone else to perform the slaughter on his behalf.

5) After the sacrifice of the offering, the pilgrim should shave his head, if a man, or trim his hair, however shaving is best. A woman should cut an amount the size of a fingertip from her hair (just like it was mentioned previously in the minor pilgrimage).

6) It is permitted for the pilgrim to advance or delay the acts of the tenth day without any sin on him. So performing the sacrifice before the stoning is permitted and shaving the hair before performing the sacrifice is permitted.

7) When the pilgrim does two of the acts of the tenth day, then he can take what is called the ‘small’ exit from the ritual state of pilgrimage. Thus everything that he was prohibited from due to the ritual state is permitted to him except intimate marital relations.

8) After completing the rites of the major pilgrimage in Mina, he should head towards Mecca in order to perform the circumambulation of visitation, or *Ifadah*, and it is the third pillar of the major pilgrimage. One should circumambulate seven times and go back and forth between as-Safa and al-Marwah seven times, if it was a ‘relaxed’ pilgrimage. It is done in this manner if one did not go back and forth between the mountains in the circumambulation of arrival. By doing the above, the pilgrim has done what is considered the ‘major’ exit from the state of pilgrimage, and thus everything prohibited is now permitted, including intimate marital relations.

9) After the visitation circumambulation and going back and forth between the mountains, the pilgrim returns to Mina in order to stay there for the three days of ‘meat-drying’, or *Tashriq*, and stoning the pillars three more times.

Fifthly: The Acts of the Major Pilgrimage in the Days of ‘Meat-Drying’, or Tashriq

The days of ‘meat-drying’ are the three days after the day of sacrifice, or the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth days of the month Dhul-Hijjah. They are days of eating and drinking during which it is not permitted to fast except for the pilgrim who was required to sacrifice and did not do so. The following acts are specific to the days of ‘meat-drying’:

1) After the pilgrim spends the night of the eleventh at Mina, he remains until midday and after that leaves to stone the pillars. He should throw seven stones consecutively, one after the other, at what is called the ‘small’ pillar, which is closest to the Khayf mosque. With each stone he throws, he should declare the greatness of Allah, then stand a bit off to the right and supplicate at length with whatever supplication he chooses, if that is feasible to do.

2) Then directly after that, he should head towards the ‘middle’ pillar, and throw seven stones afit consecutively, while declaring the greatness of Allah with each stone. Then stand a bit off to the left facing the Qiblah and supplicate at length with whatever supplication he chooses, if that is feasible to do.

3) Then directly after that, he should head towards the ‘great’ pillar, or the Aqabah pillar, and throw seven stones at it consecutively, while declaring the greatness of Allah with each stone. Then he departs without supplicating afterwards.

4) The pilgrim stays the night of the twelfth at Mina. At noon on the twelfth day of the month of Dhul-Hijjah, he does what he did on the eleventh day- he throws stones at the three pillars. If he is disabled, he can leave Mina before the sunsets and head towards Mecca for the farewell circumambulation. If he is present at

Mina for the sunset without any legitimate excuse, it is obligatory for him to remain until the day of the thirteenth, the last of the days of 'meat-drying'. He throws stones at the three pillars after midday just like the two previous days.

5) After finishing the stoning of the pillars during the meat-drying days, if the pilgrim wishes to leave Mecca, then he must head towards Mecca in order to perform the farewell circumambulation, which is seven circuits, and he must pray a two-unit prayer afterwards.

Then after that he must leave Mecca, and he should not delay for the purposes of shopping, trade or for visits, otherwise another farewell circumambulation is required of him, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) :

"No one should leave until the last of his commitments is with the House, i.e. he circumambulates the Ka`bah."[1]

If one delays due to crowds, waiting for his travel group or he is getting himself for the journey, then there is no sin in that and another circumambulation is not required.

And if a woman experiences menstruation or post-partum bleeding before the farewell circumambulation, and it is not possible for her to delay her travel group, it is permitted for her to leave without performing the farewell circumambulation.

And with the above, the pilgrim completes the rites of the major pilgrimage.

Sixthly: Things which are prohibited for the one in a state of pilgrimage

There are acts which are not permitted for the pilgrim or person performing the minor pilgrimage while in a state of pilgrimage, and for each act is an assigned expiation, while some of them invalidate the pilgrimage. These things which are prohibited are as follows:

1) Removing hair: by any means, like shaving or plucking, whether removed by the person or someone else, whether a little or a lot. This is due to the statement of Allah:

﴿وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا۟ رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْهَدْىُ مَحِلَّهُۥ﴾

"…and do not shave your heads until the Hady reaches the place of sacrifice."[2:196]

Included in that is all of the hair on the body.

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

- Whoever shaves his head without an excuse is a sinner and he owes expiation. If there was an excuse like sickness or an injury, then there is no sin in it, except he owes expiation, and it is to fast for three days, feed six poor people or slaughter a sheep. He is free to choose from any of these three options.
- It is permitted for the one in a state of pilgrimage to rub, wash and comb his hair, even if that leads to some of his hair falling out, however he should do that delicately.

2) Clipping nails: it is not permitted for the pilgrim to cut his nails after entering the state of pilgrimage for the major or minor pilgrimage. It is only recommended for him to do so before entering the state of pilgrimage. Afterwards it is prohibited for him to cut them according to consensus since it is among the comforts which are denied by the purpose of the state of pilgrimage, as Allah said:

﴿ ثُمَّ لْيَقْضُوا۟ تَفَثَهُمْ ﴾

"Then let them complete the prescribed duties (Manasik of Hajj) for them…"[22:29]

Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: 'The 'prescribed duties' are: removing the ritual garments, shaving the head, wearing regular clothing, and cutting the nails.'

3) Covering the head with something held adjacent to it: It is not permitted for a man in a state of pilgrimage to cover his head with anything adjacent to it, whether it is the small head-covering called a *Taqiyah*, the traditional head covering called a *Ghutrah*, a turban, by placing the upper garment over his head or anything like that which is not considered as a covering for the head.

If he places something over his head with which he does not intend as a cover, like a box or suitcase, then there is no harm in that.

It is permitted for a pilgrim to shade himself under the roof of a car or tent, for that is not considered among the prohibited things for the one in a state of pilgrimage.

It is not permitted for a woman to cover her face unless she fears some tribulation. In that case she can cover her face but without using a full veil or *Niqab*.

4) Sewn clothing: The basis for the one in a state of pilgrimage is to wear a lower and upper garment and to avoid sewn clothing which are sewn in order to cover the body part for whose purpose it is sewn, like a shirt, pants, robe, socks, leather socks, gloves, etc.

Sandals, even though they have stitching, are not considered among the sewn things which are prohibited to wear, rather the law has communicated it as permitted.

Women are allowed to wear whatever they wish except gloves, the full veil or anything decorative.

5) Perfume or scented oil: It is not permitted for the one in a state of pilgrimage to put on his body or ritual garments any perfume or scented oil. There is no sin in what remains of the traces of the perfume applied to the body before putting on the ritual garments. If any of the perfume gets on the ritual garments, then it is obligatory to wash it off.

6) Hunting: It is not permitted for the one in a state of pilgrimage to hunt any wild animals whose meat is eaten, like antelope, rabbit and birds. It is not permitted for him to help anyone hunt them as well, whether that is by pointing or guiding to them. If he hunts or someone hunts for him, then it is not permitted for him to eat from it since the meat has the ruling of being something killed in an illegal manner.

If an individual who is not in a state of pilgrimage hunts something, and the one who is in a state of pilgrimage did not intend for it to be hunted, it is permitted for him to eat it.

That which is caught in the sea is permitted for the one in a state of pilgrimage to eat without restriction.

7) Conclude a marriage contract: It is not permitted for the one in a state of pilgrimage to conclude a marriage contract or conclude one for someone else, even if the contract is for someone who is not in a state of pilgrimage. If he concludes a contract of marriage for himself or someone else, it was not concluded and the contract is invalid.

8) Sexual relations: It is the strongest of prohibited things in the state of pilgrimage since sexual relations with one’s wife before the one in the state of pilgrimage exits the state for the first time, invalidates his pilgrimage. And if his wife was in a state of pilgrimage, it invalidates her pilgrimage as well. Both of them must complete their pilgrimage and pay expiation which is to slaughter a camel for each of them and to distribute its meat to the poor people of the Holy Sanctuary. And they both have to repeat the pilgrimage the following year.

If the sexual relation was after the first exit from the state of pilgrimage and before the second exit, then it does not invalidate the pilgrimage, however they both owe expiation, which is to slaughter a sheep and to distribute its meat to the poor of the Holy Sanctuary.

9) Engaging in kissing, touching or hugging: All of that are among the precursors to sexual relations. So it is included in the 'sexual relations' which Allah prohibited in the verse:

﴿فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي ٱلْحَجِّ﴾

"…then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj."[2:197]

Rulings Specific to Muslim Women

Firstly: The rulings on menstruation, irregular and post-partum Bleeding

1) The rulings on menstruation

A) Its definition: Menstruation is the blood the womb lets loose when a woman reaches puberty, then repeats in fixed cycles.

B) Its cycles: Menstruation begins when a woman reaches nine lunar years of age, due to the statement of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her): 'When a girl reaches nine years of age, then she is a woman.'(1)

In most cases puberty for a woman ends at 50 years of age, due to the statement of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her): 'When a woman reaches 50 years of age she emerges from the confines of menstruation.'(2) It has continued after 50 years of age, so if a woman sees blood in its previous form after she reaches 50 years of age, then it is the blood of menstruation.

C) Its length of time: The shortest cycle of menstruation is a day and a night, and the longest cycle is 15 days. Ata said: 'I saw someone who menstruated for a day, and another who menstruated for 15 days.'

In most cases, menstruation lasts six or seven days, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Hamnah bint Jahsh (may Allah be pleased with her):

"Menstruation is six to seven days long in the knowledge of Allah, then perform major ritual ablution."(3)

D) What is prohibited for the menstruating woman

A number of matters are prohibited for the menstruation woman, among them are:

-Sex

Due to the verse:

﴿فَٱعۡتَزِلُواْ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فِي ٱلۡمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقۡرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطۡهُرۡنَ﴾

(1) Transmitted by At-Tirmidhi and al-Bayhaqi in suspended form.
(2) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and at-Tirmidhi.

"…therefore keep away from women during menses and go not unto them till they have purified (from menses and have taken a bath)."[2:222]

-Divorce

Due to the verse:

﴿فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ﴾

"…divorce them at their Iddah (prescribed periods)…"[65:1]

-Prayer

Due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"When menstruation comes then leave the prayer."(1)

-Fasting

Due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Is it not that when one of you menstruates you do not fast or pray?" They said: "Indeed."(2)

-Circumambulate the Ka`bah

Due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her):

"Complete whatever is performed for the pilgrimage except do not circumambulate the House until you are pure."(3)

-Touch the Holy Quran

Due to the verse:

﴿لَّا يَمَسُّهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱلْمُطَهَّرُونَ﴾

"Which (that Book with Allah) none can touch but the purified (i.e. the angels)."[56:79]

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

-Stay in the Mosque

Due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

“The mosque is not permitted for the one in state of major ritual impurity or the menstruating woman.”[1]

E) What is obligatory for the menstruating woman

When a woman menstruates that is linked with her having reached puberty, and it is obligatory for her to perform major ritual ablution when the blood of menstruation ends, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

“Leave the prayer for the number of days which you are menstruating, then perform major ritual ablution and pray.”[2]

F) Signs of the end of menstruation

-When there is a cessation of blood; such that if she is filled with cotton in the time of menstruation and it is not altered, then she has become pure.

-When yellow and brown is seen in the time of menstruation, then it is menstruation due to what Alqamah transmitted on authority of his mother: ‘The women used to send pieces of cotton, in a vessel to Ā’ishah, so she would say: “Do not rush until you see a white discharge”.’[3] ‘Discharge’ means a white liquid that comes after menstruation indicating a woman’s purity from menstruation.

-As for yellow or brown in the time of purity, then it is pure and a woman should not be overly concerned with it due to the statement of Umm Atiyyah (may Allah be pleased with her): ‘We used to not consider the yellow and brown after purity as anything.’[4]

G) What the menstruating woman should make up after becoming pure

The menstruating woman should make up fasting after becoming pure while she does not make up the prayer, due to the narration of Mu`adhah where she asked Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her): ‘What is with the menstruating woman having to make up fasts and not prayers?’ So she said: ‘That happened to us while with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), so we were ordered to make up the fasts and not the prayers.’[5]

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(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud while Ibn Khuzaymah authenticated it, the majority weakened it.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Malik and al-Bukhārī related it in suspended form.
(4) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and al-Bukhārī without the addition ‘after purity’.
(5) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

If the menstruating woman become pure before the sun sets, it is required for her to pray the early [*Dhuhr*] and late afternoon [*Asr*] prayers from that day. If she becomes pure before the morning prayer [*Fajr*] becomes due it is required for her to pray the early [*Maghrib*] and late evening [*Isha*] prayers from that night.

2) The rulings on irregular bleeding

A) Its definition: When blood flows outside of the usual times from an ailment or defect, from the vein in the lower part of the womb. The vein is called *al-Adhil*.

When bleeding exceeds 15 days, then a woman is considered as having irregular bleeding since it is not appropriate to refer to her bleeding as menstrual.

B) Circumstances of irregular bleeding

Firstly: A woman has a regular cycle and she knows the number of days and the time of the month [of her menstrual cycles] before irregular bleeding occurs, so she acts upon those timings and leaves prayer and fasting during its days. This is whether according to her there is distinctiveness to menstrual bleeding or not. So whatever bleeding goes beyond the normal number of days, then it is irregular bleeding due to the general statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Umm Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her):

“Wait the amount of time that your menstruation keeps you back [from fasting and prayers] then make major ritual ablution and pray.”(1)

Secondly: A woman does not have a regular cycle or she has one and has lost track of it. So if some of her bleeding is distinguishable as black, thick, odorous, and some of it is a thin and red, and the black does not increase with a heavy flow nor does it decrease with less flow, then black discharge in the time of her menstruation is a sign to leave the prayer. After that she should perform major ritual ablution and pray due to the narration of Fatimah bint Abi Hubaysh (may Allah be pleased with her), when she said: ‘Oh Messenger of Allah, I have irregular bleeding, so I do not purify myself. Should I leave the prayer?’ So he said:

“No! That is only a vein and it is not menstrual blood. When menstruation begins then leave the prayer, and when it ends then wash the blood off and pray.”(2)

And in another wording:

“If it is the blood of menstruation then it will be black, so stop praying. If is another colour then make ablution for it is only a vein bleeding.”(3)

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by An-Nasa’i.

Thirdly: A woman does not have a regular cycle and cannot distinguish between the blood of menstruation and a vein, so she is confused. She refrains six or seven days of every month searching for it. Then she should perform the major ritual ablution, fast and pray - after washing and placing upon the area of bleeding something to prevent the dropping of blood, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Hamnah bint Jahsh (may Allah be pleased with her) when she had a heavy amount of irregular bleeding:

"This is only a push among the pushes of Satan, for menstruation is six to seven days in the knowledge of Allah, then make major ritual ablution…"(1)

C) The rulings on irregular bleeding

There are rulings specific to those who bleed irregularly and their most important is that it is obligatory upon them to make ritual ablution at every prayer time due to the narration of Fatimah bint Hubaysh, which contains the words:

"…then make ablution for every prayer."(2)

3) The rulings on post-partum bleeding

A) Its definition: It is the blood that comes out from a woman due to childbirth.

B) Its length of time: There is no defined limit due to the small length of time of post-partum bleeding.

As for the longest it lasts, then it is 40 days, and anything over that is considered 'irregular bleeding', due to the narration of Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her): 'In the time of the Messenger of Allah those who had post-partum bleeding used to refrain [from fasting and praying] for 40 days.'(3)

C) What is prohibited in post-partum bleeding.

All of what is prohibited due to menstruation is prohibited due to post-partum bleeding, and the ruling on what has to be made up [of fasting and prayers] is like in menstruation.

Secondly: The veil and clothing of women

Truly among the greatest instructions which Allah has commanded women with is the veil. Allah has made it a badge of honour for her, a streamer of her virtue and a manifestation of her righteousness and due to this among the most important things for a woman to learn is what is connected with the rulings and manners of the veil.

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

1) The definition of the veil

Legally the veil is what generally covers the body of a woman- roomy, loose garments that do not describe her skin, define her beauties, and show anything of her body.

Thus the veiled woman is she whom covers her body and conceals her beauties except for what is permitted by law to show, and that is her face and hands, when she is safe from any trials, just as the majority of jurists said (may Allah have mercy on them). Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا﴾

"…and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent."[24:31]

On authority of Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: 'The apparent beauty is the face and hands.'[1] And on authority of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), she said: 'What is apparent of her is the face and hands.'[2]

It is best for a woman to cover her face as well due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"A woman should not put on a face veil or wear gloves [during the pilgrimage]…"[3]

However, outside of pilgrimage it is commendable to cover the face and hands.

2) The rulings on the veil

The veil is obligatory for an adult Muslim woman due to what Allah said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَن يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا﴾

"O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."[33:59]

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bayhaqi.
(2) Transmitted by Al-Bayhaqi.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

Umm Salamah (may Allah have mercy on her) said: ‘When this verse was revealed:

﴿يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن جَلَٰبِيبِهِنَّ﴾

“…draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e.screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way).”

The woman of the Helpers [‘Ansar] came out as if on their heads were crows, and they were wearing black garments.’(1)

3) The importance and virtue of the veil

A woman’s observance of the veil is an act of worship by which she draws near to her Lord:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ ٱلْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ﴾

“It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision.”[33:36]

So the veil is not a cultural custom inherited by society rather it is an act of worship and a legal order that is obligatory to abide by.

4) The conditions of the veil

Scholars mentioned conditions for the veil so that it would be legal and a woman would be in compliance with the command of Allah the Lofty and Sublime:

Firstly: It should cover the entire body so there does not appear any part of her body, due to the verse:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن جَلَٰبِيبِهِنَّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا﴾

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”[33:59]

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and Ibn Abi Hatim.

Also due to what the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will not look at whoever drags his garment out of arrogance.” Umm Salamah said: ‘How about the women who do so with the ends of their veil?’ He said: **“Slacken it a hand’s span”.** She said: ‘Then it uncovers their feet.’ So he said: **“Slacken it an arm’s length. Do not increase it more than that.”**[1]

Thus the legislated veil is what covers all parts of the body and something that covers the head only and shows the details of everything of the lower body is not a veil for anything.

Secondly: It should be thick and dense, not thin and revealing of the body since the point of the veil is to cover and if it does not cover it is not called a veil. For the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“Two types of people of the Hell-Fire that will come after me are: a people who have whips like the tails of cows with which they hit people, and women dressed but naked, deviating and deviated, their heads like the leaning hump of a *Bukht* camel. They will not enter paradise nor encounter its scent, even though its scent is encountered from such-and-such distance.”[2]

‘Dressed but naked’ means to wear a thin garment that describes the colour of the body, or a short garment that uncovers some of the body, or so tight that it shows the body as if naked or near naked. So technically she is dressed but naked in reality. ‘Deviating’ means she deviates others, thus they make a display themselves through multiple ways and are a source of temptation for the hearts of men by their actions. ‘Deviated’ means those who have deviated from obeying Allah the Exalted and from what is required of them of modesty and covering; and as such they are deviated in their manner of walking as well. ‘Their heads like the hump of a *Bukht* camel’ means doing their hair by wrapping and gathering it to a high point like the leaning hump of a camel.

Malik transmitted in *al-Muwatta’* that Hafsah bint Abd ar-Rahman visited Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and she had on a thin veil. So Ā’ishah ripped it and dressed her with a thick veil.

Thirdly: It is should not be decorative in itself so it is not ornate, embroidered, or decorated with colours that attract attention due to the verse:

﴿وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا﴾

(1) Transmitted by At-Tirmidhi and an-Nasa’i.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

"…and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent."[24:31]

So when it is decorative in itself then it is not allowed to wear it and it is not called a veil since a veil is what veils and prevents the display of beauty to men who are not close relatives.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Do not prevent the female slaves of Allah from the mosques of Allah, and let them go out unscented."[1]

The meaning of 'unscented' is 'not perfumed or made up'. And since this applies when she goes to the mosque and for worship, then for anything else is even more appropriate.

Accordingly it is obligatory for a veiled Muslim woman to keep away from putting on cosmetics when going out of her home due to what it entails of displaying that beauty which she is commanded to not display to non-relatives, and due to what it entails of directing the attention of men towards her. In that, there is no difference between a little or heavy amount of cosmetics.

Fourthly: It should be loose or roomy, not tight, does not give away the shape of the body and does not show parts of her that cause trials.

Fifthly: The garments should not be perfumed or scented with musk due to what it entails of provoking men. This is according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"When one of you attends the mosque, then let her not handle any perfume."[2]

If this is when a woman goes to the mosque, then how about when she goes elsewhere?!

Sixthly: It should not resemble men's clothing due to the narration of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him):

'The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) cursed the man who wears women's clothing and the woman who wears men's clothing.'[3] The curse is expulsion from the mercy of Allah.

Seventhly: It is should not be ostentatious in which showing off and pride is intended in front of people, or it should not draw attention on account of its ostentation, luxuriousness, or its being different to the usual, well-known clothing

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad and Ibn Hibban.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

of the people of the region, and similar issues. This is due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Whoever wears a garment of ostentation in the worldly life, Allah will dress him in a garment of humiliation on the Day of Resurrection."[1]

Thirdly: How a woman should dress in the prayer

It is obligatory for a woman to cover all of her body other than her face and hands in the prayer. And that is due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Allah does not accept the prayer of a menstruating woman except with a veil."[2] 'Menstruating woman' means a woman who has reached the age of menstruation, and 'veil' here means what covers the head and neck.

On authority of Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her), she said about a woman praying in a shirt and head covering without a lower garment: 'Since the shirt is complete it covers the tops of her feet.'[3]

Also, she ought to gather herself while bowing and prostrating instead of opening up, and leaving her feet loose and placing them to the side instead of placing them up in the Tawarruk and Iftiraash position, in order to keep them covered.

Fourthly: Rulings on the beauty of women

1) Traits of the natural human disposition

It is recommended for a woman to safeguard what is specific to her of the traits of the natural human disposition which the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged taking care of in his statement:

"The natural human disposition consists of five things: circumcision, removing the pubic hairs, plucking the armpits, clipping the nails, and trimming the moustache."[4] 'Removing the pubic hairs' means shaving the hairs of the pubic region, and it is the hair growing around the privates.

So it is required for a woman to be attentive in eliminating the hair of the pubic region, the hair of the armpits, and clipping her nails when they grow long due to what that entails of cleanliness and comeliness. She should not neglect any of that for longer than 40 days due to the statement of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him): 'The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) set a time for us that we not

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad and Ibn Majah.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.
(3) Transmitted by Abu Dawud.
(4) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

neglect trimming the moustache, clipping the nails, shaving the pubic region, and plucking the armpits for longer than 40 days.'[1]

2) Dying the hands and feet, darkening the eyelids and colouring the hair

It is recommended for a woman, and specifically married women, to dye her hands and feet with henna and to darken her eyelids with antimony, or something similar, in her home and not upon leaving it. For on authority of Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), she said: 'A woman gestured for a book with her hand from behind a curtain at the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). So he withheld his hand and said: **"I do not know whether it is the hand of a man or a woman."** She said: 'Rather, that of a woman.' So he said: **"If you are a woman then change your nails,"** meaning 'with henna'.[2]

However, a woman should not dye her nails with something that will harden on them and prevent water from reaching them when making ablution, like nail polish. And if she does so, then she must remove it when making ablution.

On authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: 'Indeed among the best of things with which to darken the eyelids is antimony. It clears up the vision and causes the eyelashes to grow.'[3] 'Antimony' is a dark stone with a tinge of red, used in darkening the eyelids.

Likewise it is permitted for a woman to dye the hair of her head with henna or something else, specifically when it has some grey. However it is disliked for her to dye her hair using the colour black due to the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited that. For on authority of Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: 'I came with Abu Quhafah on the day Makkah was conquered, and his head and beard were the colour of the fruits of a certain plant that are very white.' So the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Change this with something else and avoid using black."[4] The 'plant' mentioned has a white flower and white hair is comparable with its fruit.

3) Cutting and shaving the hair

It is permitted for a woman to cut the hair on her head and trim it due to the actions of the wives of the Prophet (peace be upon him). On authority of Abu Salamah ibn Abd ar-Rahman, he said: 'The wives of the Prophet used to trim their hair to just past the earlobes.'[5] 'Just past the earlobes' means when the hair on the head reaches the ear lobes.

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i.
(3) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.
(4) Transmitted by Muslim.
(5) Transmitted by Muslim.

However it is not permitted for a woman to cut her hair with the intention of appearing like disbelieving women, or in a way that appears like a man. This is due to what is established of the prohibition of appearing like disbelievers in general and women appearing like men. On authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: 'The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) cursed those among men who appear like women, and those among women who appear like men.'(1)

Likewise it is not permitted for a woman to shave her hair off unless out of necessity.

4) Hair extensions

It is not permitted for a woman to extend the hair on her head or to lengthen it with someone else's hair, regardless of whether it is natural or artificial, like a wig, due to what that entails of falsification. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Allah curses the one who does hair extensions and the one who seeks to have extensions put in her hair."(2) 'The one who does hair extensions' is the one who attaches to a woman's hair someone else's, and 'the one who seeks to have hair extensions put in her hair' is the one who has that done to her.

5) Tattoos, plucking the eyebrows and gapping the teeth

It is not permitted for a woman to tattoo any part of her body, to remove the hair on her eyebrows, to open and create space between the teeth wishing to improve her appearance. This is due to what it entails of changing the creation of Allah the Exalted and the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed whoever did that. On authority of Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: 'Allah curses tattoo artists and those who seek to have it done, those who pluck eyebrows and those who seek to have it done and those who gap teeth for the sake of beauty- those who change the creation of Allah.'(3)

Tattooing is to prick the hand or face with a needle or something similar, then to insert antimony or ink into the place of the needle prick. A 'tattoo artist' is a person who tattoos someone else.

Plucking the eyebrows is to remove the hair of the eyebrows or some of it by shaving, plucking or using a removal compound.

Gapping the teeth is to create space between teeth whether that is through filing the teeth or some other way until there occurs a small opening between them, and this is done out of a desire for beautification.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim and related with the wording of Muslim

When the teeth are misaligned and corrective work is needed, or there is decay which requires restoration work to be done because of that, then there is harm in it.

Fifthly: The rulings on a woman leaving her home and dealing with men not closely related

When a woman leaves her home then it is essential for her to abide by the following rulings and etiquette:

1) She should be covered with a veil on her face which was previously clarified, she should not be adorned, whether with jewellery, bright colours, or anything like that, and she should not be perfumed. For the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Do not prevent the female slaves of Allah from the mosques of Allah, and let them go out unscented."[1]

The meaning of 'unscented' is 'not perfumed'.

2) She should lower her gaze from looking at what is not permitted for her. Allah the Exalted has ordered her to do that, just as He has ordered men:

﴿قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ﴾

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.)…"[24:30-31]

3) She should beware of speaking with non-related men with a soft voice and of walking while stamping with her feet due to what that entails of causing a trial and temptation for men. Allah the Lofty and Sublime has prohibited women from doing that:

﴿فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا﴾

"…then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable manner."[33:32]

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad and Ibn Hibban.

And Allah the Glorified said:

﴿وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِن زِينَتِهِنَّ﴾

"And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment."[24:31]

4) She should avoid competing with men especially in markets and similar places. And she should beware of being alone with men who are not closely related to her for the Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not be alone with a woman who does not have a close male relative with her, for indeed the third of them is Satan."(1)

Some women and their guardians have become relaxed with some types of being alone and mixing with men who are not closely related despite doubts so they remain alone such with a chauffeur, doctor, or employee and with relatives that are not forbidden to her in wedlock (brother-in-law, cousin, etc) and this last category poses a greater danger than anything else due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Beware of visiting women." So a man from the Helpers ['Ansaar] said: 'Oh Messenger of Allah, what about the in-laws?' He replied: **"The in-laws are death."**(2)

'In-laws' here means relatives of the husband like his brother. The meaning of 'the in-laws are death' is that the fear surrounding them is greater than with anyone else, just as the fear of death is greater than the fear of anything else.

5) She should not shake hands with a man who is not a close relative due to what that entails of trials, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Truly I do not shake hands with women."(3)

He also said to his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them):

"That one of you be stabbed in the head with an iron needle is better than touching a woman that is not permitted to him. " (4)

There is no distinction in that between her shaking hands with a barrier like gloves or not due to the trials that it leads to.

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim
(3) Transmitted by Malik, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.
(4) Transmitted by At-Tabarani.

Chapter Four

The Relationship of a New Muslim with Society

The one who reflects on the textual sources of Islamic law will understand that the variety and differences in the attitudes and creeds of humankind are a universal norm linked to the will and wisdom of Allah, as He the Exalted said:

﴿وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ﴾

"And if your Lord had so willed, He could surely have made mankind one Ummah [nation or community (following one religion only i.e. Islam)], but they will not cease to disagree, except him on whom your Lord has bestowed His mercy and for that did He create them."[11:118-119]

And Islam, like the divinely-inspired religion and legal system it is, recognizes these differences and deals with it as a forgone conclusion. Especially since the cause of all people being guided is an impossible one, as Allah said:

﴿وَمَآ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾﴾

"And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly."[12:103]

Due to this He established for its followers the groundwork and rules which organize their relationships with others, preserve their principles and teachings for them, and protect them from disorder and confusion. In agreement with its importance, the preservation and maintenance of the dignity and honour of a Muslim is the first priority. Mercy, tolerance, kindness and justice along with all noble characteristics are a part of the social life of this great religion that cannot be separated from it.

And in what is to come, we will cover a collection of topics that will clarify and define for a new Muslim the foundations of dealing with non-Muslims, irrespective of whether they are relatives or not. This will be done under the following headings:

- Family relations
- Financial relations
- Social and personal relations

The Relationship of Spouses when One or Both Accept Islam

The family is considered in any society to be the most important brick in its structure and the first foundation in its formation. The family acquires its importance from its being an important societal system where society relies on it to care for and direct its individuals by what it yields of strength, growth, and development.

In looking at the great importance and the serious role of family life whose structure is the marital relationship, Islam attaches importance to the regulation of this relationship to the farthest limits and encourages securing the means which facilitate what it requires for continuity and survival. Considering that Islam invites all people to enter it and follow its true guidance, it takes into consideration that there exists between those who enter it and others agreements and firm familial associations that are not easy to undo and put an end to. So Islam works toward its regulation and clarifies its limits and dimensions. It so happens that non-Muslim spouses who are associated by marital bond accept Islam, whether they become Muslim together at the same time, or one precedes the other in entering Islam.

So what is the ruling on the marital contract in these situations?

Firstly: Spouses accepting Islam together

The scholars agree that when two spouses accept Islam together at the same time and sitting, they remain together upon the marriage and contract which existed before they accepted Islam, as long as there is no legal obstacle preventing this marriage from continuing. This ruling is the same whether they accepted Islam before consummating the marriage or afterwards. A great number of people accepted Islam in the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and the Messenger of Allah confirmed their contracts of marriage which were conducted before their acceptance of Islam without asking them about how they were done or the extent to which the conditions of the contracts were fulfilled.

As for when the marital contract which was conducted before they accepted Islam is not valid to continue, due to a close family relationship or a shared wet nurse, then indeed the marriage is annulled between them upon their entering Islam. For example, when a man marries a woman from among his close female relatives like his mother, sister, daughter or his father's ex-wife. Another example is when there is a marriage between a man and woman who shared a wet nurse making her his mother or sister through breast feeding. Also, whoever accepts Islam and has more than four wives, then he must choose four of them and separate

from the rest since Islam does not permit to him more than four wives united in marriage to him. On authority of Abdullah ibn Umar, he said:

'Ghaylan ath-Thaqafi accepted Islam and he had ten wives, so the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "Keep four and separate from the rest of them".

And in another transmission: **"Choose four of them".'**(1)

Another example is if a man is married to two sisters, then he must choose one of them and separate from the other since Islam does not permit for him to join two sisters in marriage due to Allah's statement in clarification of who is prohibited to marry from among women:

﴿وَأَن تَجْمَعُواْ بَيْنَ ٱلْأُخْتَيْنِ﴾

"…and two sisters in wedlock at the same time."[4:23]

Secondly: One spouse accepts Islam

The second profile for non-Muslim spouses is that one of them accepts Islam before the other, and this profile is further divided into a number of scenarios:

Firstly: One of the spouses who is a Christian or a Jew accepts Islam after the contract of marriage is done but before consummation:

When a Christian or Jewish husband accepts Islam before his wife, and he became Muslim after the marriage contract with her and before consummation of it, then that contract which was concluded before he accepted Islam is confirmed since a Muslim is permitted to marry a Christian or Jewish woman, so it is allowed for this marriage to continue. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ﴾

*"(Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)."***[5:5]**

And if the wife who is a Christian or Jew accepts Islam before her husband, after the marriage contract and before its consummation, then her marriage is annulled immediately. And in this, there is no distinction whether the husband in a Christian, Jew or otherwise since it is not permitted for a non-Muslim to ever marry a Muslim woman due to what Allah the Exalted said:

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Ibn Hibban.

﴿فَإِنۡ عَلِمۡتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤۡمِنَٰتٖ فَلَا تَرۡجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى ٱلۡكُفَّارِۖ لَا هُنَّ حِلّٞ لَّهُمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّۖ﴾

"…then if you ascertain that they are true believers, send them not back to the disbelievers, they are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them."[60:10]

Secondly: One of the spouses who is not a Christian or Jew accepts Islam after the marriage contract and before it is consummated:

When the husband accepts Islam before his non-Christian or Jew wife, it is the same whether he is a Christian, Jew or otherwise. If he enters Islam after the marriage contract and before consummation, then indeed that obligates that they separate at the time of his entering Islam since the Muslim is not permitted to marry a non-Christian or Jew due to the statement of Allah the Exalted:

﴿وَلَا تُمۡسِكُواْ بِعِصَمِ ٱلۡكَوَافِرِ﴾

"Likewise hold not the disbelieving women as wives…"[60:10]

- When one of the spouses accepts Islam before consummation and they are obligated to separate, then indeed the wife is due half of the dowry in this scenario if it is the husband who enters Islam. The separation takes place because of him in this case. As for when it is the wife who enters Islam, then she does not have a right to any of the dowry since the separation takes place because of her.

- When one of the spouses accepts Islam after consummation, then indeed the husband is required to pay the entire dowry to the wife, regardless of whether the husband or wife accepted Islam first.

Thirdly: One of the spouses accepts Islam after consummating the marriage:

There is no exception to applying one of the following scenarios in this profile:

1) The husband accepts Islam and the wife is a Christian or Jew:

If the husband accepts Islam before his Christian or Jewish wife, and it was after consummation, then indeed the marriage which was conducted before his accepting Islam is confirmed since it is permitted for a Muslim to marry a Christian or Jew, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَٱلۡمُحۡصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتِ وَٱلۡمُحۡصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ﴾

"(Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)."[5:5]

Thus it is permitted for him to continue with this marriage.

2) The husband accepts Islam and the wife is not a Christian or Jew:

When the husband accepts Islam before his wife who is not a Christian or Jew, and his acceptance of Islam is after consummation, then indeed he must separate from her unless the remainder of the marriage contract between them and its termination is contingent upon the end of the waiting period for the divorce. Then if she accepts Islam before the end of the waiting period for divorce - and it consists of three cycles of menstruation for a woman who menstruates, three months for one who does not, or giving birth for the woman who is pregnant - the previous contract of marriage is confirmed and the existing marriage remains between them. And if the wife does not accept Islam and her waiting period ends, they are to be separated from the time of the husband's entering Islam. Abu Sufyan ibn Harb had accepted Islam before his wife Hind bint Utbah, and she accepted Islam after him by a day. The Prophet (peace be upon him) confirmed their original marriage contract.

3) The wife accepts Islam and the husband is a non-Muslim (Christian, Jew or otherwise)

If the wife accepts Islam and the husband is a non-Muslim, it does not matter if he is a Christian, Jew or a non-Christian or non-Jew, and her acceptance of Islam was after consummation, then it is obligatory for the woman to separate from her husband, and it is not permitted for her to give him authority over herself unless there remains in the marriage contract between them a condition on the end of the waiting period. Then if the husband accepts Islam before the end of her waiting period, their previous contract is confirmed, and if he does not accept Islam until the end of her waiting period, separation takes place between them and leaves her husband with the end of her waiting period. On authority of Dawud ibn Kurduws, he said: 'There was a man from the tribe of Taghlib called Abbad ibn al-Numan ibn Zurah who had married a woman from the tribe of Tamim. He was a Christian and his wife accepted Islam. He refused to accept Islam, so Umar separated them.'(1) And on authority of Ibn Abbas, he said: 'When a Christian woman accepts Islam before her husband by an hour, she becomes prohibited to him.'(2)

Some of the wives of the Companions accepted Islam before their husbands and their husbands accepted Islam after them during the course of their waiting period,

(1) Transmitted by Ibn Abi Shaybah.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

so the Prophet (peace be upon him) confirmed their marriages and did not conduct new contracts, like what happened with Safwan ibn Umayyah and Ikrimah Ibn Abu Jahl.

- When the wife accepts Islam before her husband, then it is permitted for her to inform him of her acceptance of Islam and it is recommended for her to invite him to Islam with goodly words and to make clear to him that barring his acceptance and embracement of Islam during the course of her waiting period of divorce from him [due to her acceptance of Islam], it will be obligatory for her to separate from him.

The Relationship of aNew Muslim with His Children

Firstly: Who the children follow after accepting Islam

A child under the age of puberty or mentally challenged follows his parents in the religion they associate themselves with. For if they are Jews, he is a Jew, like them. If they are Christians, he is a Christian, like them. And if they are Muslim, he is a Muslim like them, in accordance with the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

“There is no baby except he is born upon the natural disposition of Tawhid, then his parents make him a Jew, Christian or Magian.”(1)

When one or both parents accept Islam, and the child is not an adult or is mentally challenged, he becomes a Muslim following the better religion of the two parents, and it is the religion the one who accepted Islam. If the one who became Muslim is the father, his child follows him in his religion and becomes a Muslim like him. If the mother becomes a Muslim, the child follows her in her religion and becomes a Muslim since Islam rises above and is not surmounted. It is the religion that Allah the Glorified and Exalted is pleased with for His slaves. As for when both parents accept Islam after their child has reached adulthood or an adult mentally challenged child has been declared sane, then he is not ruled to be a Muslim unless he confirms it for himself by following the religion of Islam in accordance with the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

“There is not a baby born except he is upon this natural disposition of Islam until he expresses otherwise in words.”(2)

Secondly: Raising children after accepting Islam

Scholars agree that when parents accept Islam together, then the children should be raised by both of them. If one of the parents accepts Islam before the other, and the wife (mother) does so before the husband (father), then the mother and not the father raises the child. If the father accepts Islam and not the mother, then the Muslim father raises the child. Raising the child is only done by the Muslim parent since leaving the child with a non-Muslim parent is clearly harmful for him since he will be affected, the majority of the time, by the religion of the one who raises him. So a non-Muslim parent will take the child out of the religion of Islam step by step.

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(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Muslim.

Raising children is a type of having authority over the youth, and among the settled matters is the law that it is not permitted for a disbeliever to have authority over a Muslim. On authority of Rafi ibn Sinan it is related that he accepted Islam and his wife refused to accept Islam, so she went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: "My daughter" and she was weaned or almost weaned. Rafi said: "My daughter". So the Prophet said to him: ***"Sit on one side"***, and he said to her: ***"Sit on another side"***. Then the young girl was seated between them and he said: ***"Call to her"***. The young girl inclined toward her mother, and the Prophet said: ***"Oh Allah guide her"***. Then the young girl inclined towards her father, so he took her.[1] So when the young girl inclined at first to her mother, the Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated for her guidance. Then she inclined towards her father. The supplication of the Prophet (peace be upon him) for her guidance shows that her being with the disbelievers opposes the guidance of Allah which He wishes for.

The scholars among the second generation of Muslims (*Tabi`in*, may Allah have mercy on them) stipulated the above when al-Hasan al-Basri said about the child: "[He belongs] with the Muslim among his parents."[2]

On authority of Ibrahim an-Nakha'i, he said regarding two Christians who have a child and one of them accepts Islam: "The more entitled of the two is the Muslim."[3]

Thirdly: Guardianship in the marriage

Among the settled matters is the law that a woman cannot manage a marriage herself, rather that can only be managed by her guardian in accordance to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Whenever a woman gets married without the permission of her guardian, then her marriage is invalid." He said that three times.[4]

Unless a woman accepts Islam and her guardian is a non-Muslim, then it is not correct for him to be a guardian for his daughter in marriage after her acceptance of Islam. This is because the law has cut off the guardianship of the disbeliever over the Muslims, as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَلَن يَجۡعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِلۡكَٰفِرِينَ عَلَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ١٤١﴾

"And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers."[4:141]

(1) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i in Al-Kubra.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī related it in suspended form and al-Bayhaqi connected it.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī related it in suspended form and Abd ar-Razzaq connected it.
(4) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) declared the elevation of the religion of Islam over any other one with his statement:

"Islam rises above and is not surmounted."[1]

So the affair of a Muslim woman is not entrusted to anyone except a Muslim from among her guardians, in accordance with His statement:

﴿ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ﴾

"The believers, men and women, are Auliya' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another."[9:71]

And non-Muslims entrust matters to one another, in accordance to His statement:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ﴾

"And those who disbelieve are allies to one another."[8:73]

Based on that, the guardian of a Muslim woman is her closest relative from among the Muslims. If there are no Muslims found among them then her guardian is the Muslim ruler or whoever represents him like a judge or the one in charge of the Muslim community. If such a person cannot be found then a man from among the righteous Muslims is appointed to manage her marriage contract.

Also, it is not correct for a Muslim guardian to manage the marriage contract of his non-Muslim daughter since he has no guardianship over her since the verse in the Quran declares that only non-Muslims can be guardians over one another. This is in addition to the fact that guardianship is based upon the relationship of inheritance between the father and the children, and the law has cut off this relationship when they have different religions. Thus guardianship is cut off by that as well.

Fourthly: Guardianship and custody of children

Among the legal rulings which are affected by children and parents having different religions is the guardianship of the non-Muslim father over his Muslim children. For if the children are determined to be Muslim and the father is non-Muslim, then he has no guardianship over the wealth of his children if they are minors, mentally challenged, or under the legal age. Guardianship transfers to the closest Muslim relative or whoever a judge designates as a guardian over them

(1) Transmitted by Ad-Daraqutni.

since the affair of a Muslim cannot be entrusted except to a Muslim like him - therefore the rest of the considerable conditions are secured in it, due to the verse:

﴿ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ﴾

"The believers, men and women, are Auliya' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another."[9:71]

As for a non-Muslim, then he can have no guardianship over a Muslim due to the verse:

﴿ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ١٤١ ﴾

"And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers."[4:141]

Likewise it is not permitted for the father - whether he is a Muslim or non-Muslim - to grant custody of his Muslim children to a non-Muslim after his death since custody is a type of guardianship and the law has denied guardianship and authority for a non-Muslim over a Muslim.

The Relationship of a New Muslim with His Parents and the Rest of His Relatives

Firstly: Dutifulness and goodness to non-Muslim parents

Among the most significant matters which distinguish our true religion is its call to manifest virtuous manners and eminent care in dealing with all people. Thus the Muslim who belongs to this religion ought to be first to represent this care and these manners in reality and in conduct. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا﴾

"…and speak good to people [i.e. enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, and say the truth about Mohammed Peace be upon him]."[2:83]

He also said:

﴿وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

"…and argue with them in a way that is better."[16:125]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has advised his community to manifest this care, for he directed at them the following words:

"Join with whoever cuts ties with you. Give to whoever withholds from you. Pardon whoever does injustice towards you."(1)

There is no one more deserving of dutifulness and goodness in treatment than parents who are the reason for a person's existence after Allah the Exalted. Due to this, Allah raised their value and afforded being good and kind towards them a standing just after that of believing in Him. Allah the Lofty and Sublime said:

﴿وَٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا﴾

"Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents…"[4:36]

He also said:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا﴾

"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents."[17:23]

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad.

The greatness of Islam is manifested when it advises dutifulness and goodness to parents even if they are non-Muslims, for Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ فِى عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِى
وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا
وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ﴾

"And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination. But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly."[31:14-15]

And He the Glorified and Praiseworthy said:

﴿ وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَآ ﴾

"And We have enjoined on man to be good and dutiful to his parents, but if they strive to make you join with Me (in worship) anything (as a partner) of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not."[29:8]

On authority of Asma bint Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with her): 'My mother arrived with her father while a polytheist during the treaty and time of the Quraysh, when they concluded a treaty with the Prophet (peace be upon him). So I sought the ruling of the Prophet and said: "My mother arrived and she wishes to maintain ties, so should I do so with her?" He said: **"Yes, maintain ties with her"**.'[1]

Truly dutifulness to parents - even if they are non-Muslim - is obligatory with regards to their Muslim children. They are not prohibited from being kind to them, obeying them, being good towards them, tending to their care, and they should not subject them to insults, curses or harm. It is not permitted to do any of that to them under the pretence that they are non-Muslims. The sanctity of obedience to them is restricted in Islam only in the case that they command their children with disobedience to Allah, like if they demand that they apostate from the religion of Islam, neglect an obligation or requirement which Islam commands that they adhere to, or if they ask them to commit something prohibited like drink alcohol, eat pork, commit fornication or anything else that Islam has prohibited. Thus the

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

general principle in the religion of Allah is just as the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) declared:

"There is no obedience to the creation in disobedience to the Creator."(1)

Among the greatest acts of dutifulness that a Muslim can do for his parents is to invite them to Islam with goodly words and kindness, and to make clear to them the greatness of the religion of Islam while exhibiting lofty behaviour and observing the teachings, manners and eminence of Islam.

Secondly: Dutifulness and goodness to non-Muslim relatives

It is from the loftiness of Islam that it commands Muslims to maintain ties with and to be good to close relatives even if they are non-Muslims. Allah the Exalted directs the following words to His believing slaves:

﴿وَٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشۡرِكُواْ بِهِۦ شَيۡـٔٗاۖ وَبِٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ إِحۡسَٰنٗا﴾

"Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk…"[4:36]

And to demonstrate the good character of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in how he showed love to his close relatives even if they were non-Muslims, He the Glorified said:

﴿قُل لَّآ أَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ أَجۡرًا إِلَّا ٱلۡمَوَدَّةَ فِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰۗ﴾

"Say (O Mohammed SAW): 'No reward do I ask of you for this except to be kind to me for my kinship with you'."[42:23]

And in a narration on authority of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he said:

"Truly the people of my father and such-and-such tribe are not my protectors, rather my protector is only Allah and the righteous Muslims. However they have kinship so water it with maintaining ties with them," in other words maintain ties with them with a kindness that is appropriate.(2)

So a Muslim ought to be good in dealing with his close relatives and he should maintain ties with them even if they severe ties with him, due to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"The one who maintains ties of kinship is not the one who maintains ties with whoever does so with him. Rather the one who maintains ties of kinship is the one who continues maintaining ties when his close relatives severe ties with him."(3)

(1) Transmitted by Ahmad and at-Tabarani.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

The Muslim ought to show love towards relatives through goodly words and kindness in order to awaken their interest in the religion of Islam. And he should help the poor and needy among them, for indeed all of this is from dutifulness, kindness, and goodness which Allah commands us to do. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ لَّا يَنْهَىٰكُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

"Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity."[60:8]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was given some garments, and he gave one of them to Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him). Then he gave it to a brother of his from the people of Makkah before he accepted Islam.

A Muslim ought to know that maintaining ties of kinship and relatives is a source of good for him in the worldly life and the hereafter. Allah will bless him in his life and provision, and it can be a means for him to enter paradise. On authority of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him), a man said: "Oh Messenger of Allah! Inform me about a deed by which it will admit me into paradise." So the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Worship Allah and do not join partners with Him at all, establish the prayers, pay the obligatory charity and maintain ties with relatives."(1)

On authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever would love that his provision be expanded and that his appointed time be delayed, then let him maintain ties with his relatives."(2)

A Muslim must not be heedless of his high purpose which is the salvation of his relatives and people from the displeasure and punishment of Allah. Thus he should persist in calling them to Islam whenever the chance presents itself to him, for Allah the Exalted advised His Prophet to call his people and relatives, saying:

﴿ وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾ ﴾

"And warn your tribe (O Mohammed SAW) of near kindred."[26:214]

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(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

He maintained goodly words and excellent preaching in the speech used in calling them, just as Allah advised him, saying:

﴿ ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ﴾

"Invite (mankind, O Mohammed SAW) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better."**[16:125]**

The Economic Relationships of the Muslim

Firstly: Expenses

Expenses are whatever a person pays in order to discharge the maintenance of his parents, wife and children with food, drink, clothing and shelter, without excess.

These expenses are obligated upon the spender even if the one he spends on has a different religion since Allah the Exalted said regarding the rights of the non-Muslim parents:

﴿ وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ﴾

"But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly…"[31:15]

Among the characteristics of accompanying them with kindness is to spend on them since it is not deemed as goodness or kindness for a person to live in an easy condition while his parents are needy and poor.

The condition of the children is like that as well, for indeed spending on them is obligatory for their father even if he is a non-Muslim. That is because spending is a tie and solace among the rights of the relatives, and Allah the Exalted has appointed rights for the relatives, and made it clear that disbelief alone does not nullify the rights of the relatives as is found in the verse mentioned previously.

Also the obligation of spending on relatives despite having different religions is emphasized in what came in a narration of Asma (may Allah be pleased with her) when she sought the permission of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to maintain ties of kinship with her mother. The Prophet replied to her:

"Maintain the ties of kinship with your mother."

Al-'Imam al-Khattabi said: "In this narration is proof that the disbelieving relative is to be maintained with wealth and similar things as if maintaining ties with a Muslim, and the obligation of spending on the disbelieving father and mother is concluded from it, even if the child is Muslim."[1]

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(1) Fath al-Bari 5/234.

Mohammed ibn al-Hasan would say: “It is obligatory for the Muslim child to spend on his parents who are non-Muslim and protected by the Islamic state due to the verse:

﴿وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي ٱلدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا﴾

“…but behave with them in the world kindly…”[31:15]

And it is not from ‘behaving with them kindly’ to be unsteady regarding the blessings of Allah, to leave them dying of starvation and calamities. And the grandparents from both the father and mother’s side are in the same category as the parents in that regard- they have the same position as the parents with respect to birth.”

Likewise it is obligatory for the Muslim to spend on his wife who is a non-Muslim (a Christian or Jew) protected by the Islamic state since spending is among the legal rulings of a sound marriage contract. Marriage with a non-Muslim woman protected by the Islamic state is permitted by Islam and is confirmed, thus the obligation of spending on her is demanded as well.

As for a non-Muslim woman who is not protected by the Islamic state, nor does she follow a divinely revealed religion, then she is not to be spent on since it is not permitted for a Muslim to remain in a bond of marriage with her. This is due to the verse:

﴿وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا۟ بِعِصَمِ ٱلْكَوَافِرِ﴾

“Likewise hold not the disbelieving women as wives…”[60:10]

If the marriage contract is invalid, it follows that the effects resulting from it are invalid, and among them is the obligation to spend.

Secondly: The Dowry

If a man gives a dowry to his wife before accepting Islam, then they both become Muslims, and the wife had taken her dowry before accepting Islam and then became a Muslim, the husband should not be requested to exchange it after accepting Islam. That is even if the dowry which was taken was something that is not allowed to be called a ‘dowry’, like a pig or alcohol. If the wife has not taken possession of her dowry, then it is obligatory for the husband to exchange that prohibited dowry for a dowry of equal value since Islam cannot confirm a prohibited dowry for a Muslim woman. And if she has already taken possession of a part of the dowry and the husband still has a portion of it in his care, then she is due the equivalent value of what remains of the dowry [from a permissible source].

Thirdly: Inheritance

Inheritance between relatives is among the legal rulings that Islam came to legislate and organize. Thus Allah the Exalted made for the categories of relatives a share in the wealth of their deceased relative in accordance with defined rules and principles.

The scholars have made it clear that the right of the relative to the wealth which a testator has left behind for him does not exist except upon the fulfilment of its conditions and the absence of obstacles to it. And among the most significant of these conditions is the testator and the inheritor sharing the same religion. Therefore the law establishes that having different religions prevents inheritance between relatives, whether the inheritor is a disbeliever and the testator a Muslim, or the inheritor is a Muslim and the testator a disbeliever. On authority of Usamah ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"The Muslim does not inherit from the disbeliever nor the disbeliever from the Muslim."(1)

And on authority of Abdullah ibn Amr (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"The people of two different religions do not inherit from one another."(2)

Fourthly: Wealth obtained before accepting Islam

If wealth which has been obtained by a non-Muslim before accepting Islam from a permitted route, like trade in permitted merchandise, permitted professional occupation, or anything else that is permitted in Islam as a basis, then there is no difference of opinion on that wealth being permissible for its owner. Sound contracts which began before accepting Islam and whose terms continue after accepting Islam are prepared in terms of their effects- from the entitlement of the seller to the profit to the obligation of delivering the merchandise to the buyer.

As for wealth that was obtained from a prohibited route like contracts involving usury, gambling and prohibited forms of trade like selling pork, alcohol and drugs, then if the person has already begun the prohibited contract and taken what originated from it before entering Islam, then he is forgiven for what he has taken even if it was prohibited as a basis. He is not required to remove the prohibited wealth from the source of his wealth since that passed in the time of his disbelief and Islam erases whatever happened before it due to the verse:

﴿ قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِن يَنتَهُواْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُم مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ﴾

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

"Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief) their past will be forgiven."[8:38]

Allah the Lofty said about the one who deals with usury:

﴿ فَمَن جَآءَهُۥ مَوۡعِظَةٞ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ ﴾

"So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Riba (usury) shall not be punished for the past…"[2:275]

If the prohibited contract began before accepting Islam, and he accepted Islam before taking anything originating from it, then it is not permitted for him to continue with that prohibited contract, and that contract is considered void.

If he has taken possession of a portion of it and there remains another portion of it that he has not taken, then whatever he has taken is sanctioned and what remains and he has not taken is canceled. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَذَرُواْ مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓاْ ﴾

"O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Riba (usury) (from now onward)…"[2:278]

And in a narration on authority of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he said:

"And the usury of the times of ignorance is invalid."(1)

Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) invalidated usury after entering into Islam, and he did not deal with what was before entering into Islam and he did not command that it be returned. So it demonstrates that it remains with the owner who earned and received its price.

On authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Every share distributed in the times of ignorance remains with whoever it was allotted to. And every share that happens under Islam must be distributed according to Islam."(2)

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.
(2) Transmitted by Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah

Social and Personal Relations

Firstly: Love and Support (Allegiance & Antagonism)

Despite the fact that Islam encourages its followers to practice fairness and righteousness when dealing with the all creatures of Allah irrespective of their orientation and religion, Islam also emphasizes that such dealings should not lead Muslims to go beyond limits in their relation with non-Muslims so that they reach a level of allegiance, love, and support for non-Muslims. The reason for this is that allegiance should not be to anyone except to those whom Allah the Exalted has informed us about when He said:

﴿إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟﴾

Verily, your Walî (protector or Helper) is Allah, his Messenger, and the believers. [5:55]

The word "Verily" in the above verse and within its context means: 'none other than'. 'Linguistically it defines limitation and specification.

There is no allegiance to any person other than those mentioned above.

The Exalted said:

﴿لَّا يَتَّخِذِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

Let not the believers take the disbelievers as Auliyâ (supporters, helpers, etc.) instead of the believers. [3:28]

In addition, Allah the Almighty addressing the believers states:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَـٰرَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنْهُمْ﴾

O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as Auliyâ' (friends, protectors, helpers, etc.), they are but Auliyâ' to one another. And if any amongst you takes them as Auliyâ', Then surely He is one of them. [5:51]

And Allah the Almighty said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ عَدُوِّى وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِٱلْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِمَا جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْحَقِّ﴾

O you who believe! Take not my enemies and your enemies (i.e. disbelievers and polytheists, etc.) as friends, showing affection towards them, while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the Truth (i.e. Islamic Monotheism, This Quran and Mohammed [60:1]

The allegiance that Allah forbade for Muslim is of two categories:

The First: Allegiance to Infidels "Kufr"

Including love and affection towards non-Muslims for their religion or helping and supporting them in their religion in order for it to prevail over Islam. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْآخِرِ يُوَآدُّونَ مَنْ حَآدَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟
ءَابَآءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ﴾

You (O Mohammed) will not find any people who believe In Allah and the Last day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and his Messenger (Mohammed), even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). [58:22]

It is for this reason that a Muslim must declare themselves free from any attachment to the enemies of Allah and those of their religion even if they were their relatives, as we find in the excellent model for Muslims in the actions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he declared himself free from them, Allah the Exalted said:

﴿قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُا۟ مِنكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ﴾

Indeed there has been an excellent example for you In Ibrahim (Abraham) and those with him, when they said to their people: "Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allah, we have rejected you, and there has started between us and you, hostility and hatred for ever, until you believe In Allah alone. [60:4]

The Second: Forbidden Allegiance

It is the allegiance and love for non-Muslims for the sake of worldly benefit, however the Muslim despises their religion and conversely loves and wishes for the Muslims to be honoured and prevail over them, but the Muslim begins to love the non-Muslims for common worldly interest. For example, those who befriend and love them so that they can be helped in obtaining employment or those who spy on other Muslims for seeking the large amounts of money they give for such services.

This type of allegiance, albeit not causing a person to fall into disbelief, is considered a major sin that necessitates a severe punishment.

However, if a Muslim may receive some harm or is coerced by non-Muslims to be against Muslims and they fear that they may be put to trial by the non-Muslims in regards to their religion, self or honour causing them to display allegiance to them openly all the while maintaining enmity in their heart for them then they will not be blameworthy for this as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ لَّا يَتَّخِذِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ فِى
شَىْءٍ إِلَّآ أَن تَتَّقُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ تُقَىٰةً ﴾

Let not the believers take the disbelievers as Auliyâ (supporters, helpers, etc.) instead of the believers, and whoever does that will never be helped by Allah In any way, except if you indeed fear a danger from them. [3:28]

This means if you fear for yourselves, your wealth, your honour then there is no harm in a person safeguarding themselves from them by showing open allegiance through spoken words as long as the heart maintains faith in Allah as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ مَن كَفَرَ بِٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَٰنِهِۦٓ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُۥ مُطْمَئِنٌّۢ بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ وَلَٰكِن مَّن شَرَحَ
بِٱلْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾ ﴾

Whoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with faith but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a great torment. [16:106]

Furthermore, forbidden allegiance between Muslims and non-Muslims does not include maintaining good ties and love owing to having familial ties such loving parents or a spouse. However, such love should become excessive such as to a level where a Muslim begins to love their religion or the false actions that they commit; or cause themselves to commit an action that is forbidden.

Islam does not forbid Muslims from dealing with non-Muslims in trade, renting, lending, selling or purchasing, because none of these are considered as a form of allegiance and disassociation at all. The biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) is full of incidents which show that they were selling, purchasing, renting, lending and conducting other business dealings with non-Muslims.

Secondly: Justice and Fairness.

Allah the Exalted has commanded His believing servants to employ justice in all the affairs of their life. The Almighty said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوۡ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمۡ أَوِ ٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ وَٱلۡأَقۡرَبِينَ﴾

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin. [4:135]

Allah warned that detesting people and having enmity towards them should not let the Muslim be unjust or unfair, rather a Muslim should be just even with their enemies. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَآءَ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِۖ وَلَا يَجۡرِمَنَّكُمۡ شَنَـَٔانُ قَوۡمٍ
عَلَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعۡدِلُواْۚ ٱعۡدِلُواْ هُوَ أَقۡرَبُ لِلتَّقۡوَىٰ﴾

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. be just: that is nearer to piety. [5:8]

And Allah the Exalted also said:

﴿لَّا يَنۡهَىٰكُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمۡ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمۡ فِي ٱلدِّينِ وَلَمۡ يُخۡرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمۡ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمۡ وَتُقۡسِطُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِمۡۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُقۡسِطِينَ ٨﴾

Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity. [60:8]

Thirdly: Commitment to Covenants and Contracts

Islam has confirmed that commitment to covenants, charters, and contracts is one of the most important fundamentals that Islam is based upon. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَوۡفُواْ بِٱلۡعُقُودِ﴾

O you who believe! Fulfill (your) obligations. [5:1]

And He the Exalted added:

﴿وَأَوْفُوا۟ بِٱلْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

And fulfill (every) covenant. Verily! The covenant will be questioned about. [17:34]

Rather Allah the Exalted, asserted the importance of fulfilling covenants even with non-Muslims as Allah the Exalted said:

﴿إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنقُصُوكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَمْ يُظَٰهِرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا فَأَتِمُّوٓا۟
إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤﴾﴾

Except those of the Mushrikûn with whom you have a treaty, and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor have supported anyone against you, so fulfill their treaty to them to the end of their term. Surely Allah loves Al- Mattaqûn (the pious). [9:4]

And Allah the Almighty also said:

﴿إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّمْ عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۖ فَمَا ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱسْتَقِيمُوا۟ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾﴾

How can there be a covenant with Allah and with his Messenger for the Mushrikûn (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) except those with whom you made a covenant near Al-Masjid-al-Harâm (at Makkah)? So long, as they are true to you, stand you true to them. Verily, Allah loves Al-Muttaqûn (the pious). [9:7]

Biographies of our pious predecessors are full of examples that show their commitment to contracts and covenants with non-Muslims. An example of this is from Hudhaifa ibn al-Yaman (may Allah be pleased with them) when he and his father were captured by the polytheists who wanted to release both of them but stipulated to them that on their return to Medina they should not go to the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) in Badr. They agreed and promised the polytheists that they would commit to the covenant. On passing by Badr on their way to Medina, Hudhaifa and his father came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and told him what had occurred. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"Both, of you proceed (to Medina); we will fulfill the covenant made with them and seek Allah's help against them."(1)

(1) Transmitted by Muslim.

Observe, how the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged them to commit to their covenant and fulfill it.

Therefore, a Muslim is commanded to not backtrack, betray, or deceive the commitments and the contracts unless they are in violation of the law and the religion of Allah.

The rule employed here is “There can be no obedience to creation if it involves the disobedience of the Creator”. This is from that narration of Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say:

“Whoever imposes such a condition as is not in Allah's laws, then that condition is invalid even if he imposes one hundred conditions.[1]

If the contract was agreed to before embracing Islam and includes something forbidden such as a contract based on usury or a contract which contains purchasing alcohol or pork or any other thing that Islam forbids, then the contracts is void and it is not permissible to proceed with it unless one is forced to do so,

Fourthly: The Exchange of Visits and Presents

From the most important goals of exchanging visits and presents is the creation of love and friendship between the visitors and those exchanging gifts and as this love and friendship is reserved for the believers, Islam has set specific conditions on the exchange of visits and presents among Muslims and non-Muslims.

The main intention is to soften their hearts to Islam and to preach to them the religion of Allah, but if it is just for mutual affection and love then Muslims should avoid such because it will lead to numerous negative consequences including:

1) The fear that Muslims would be affected by the morality of non-Muslims and their habits and not refrain from committing forbidden actions as well as the fear of an erosion of modesty with bad effects on a Muslim’s religion and morals.

2) Affection and love might grow in the heart of Muslims towards the non-Muslims' religion, which would cause a weakness in the disloyalty of a Muslim from all false religion.

3) It may lead to an objection and dissatisfaction with the rule of Allah in regards to non-Muslims especially when one who compares the morals of non-Muslims and their advanced civilization to those of Muslims in our time.

(1) Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Due to such negative consequences the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade the believers to mingle with them as he said in the following tradition:

"Do not take as companions except believers and do not share your food except with the pious." (1)

This does not mean that Muslims should completely stop visiting non-Muslims, rather there is nothing wrong with exchanging visits and presents with them in order to achieve a religious interest or permissible worldly interest. For example, a non-Muslim is hosted by a Muslim; or a Muslim preaches to a non-Muslim and guides them to the truth; or a business transaction requires they visit one another or give presents to each other, as narrated by Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib from his father in the following Prophetic narration:

When Abu Talib's death approached, the Prophet went to him while Abu Jahl and Abdullah ibn Abu Umayyah were present with him. The Prophet said, "O uncle, say: None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, so that I may argue for your case before Allah." On that, Abu Jahl and Abdullah ibn Abu Umayyah said, "O Abu Talib! Do you want to renounce Abdul Muttalib's religion?" Then the Prophet said, "I will keep on asking (Allah for) forgiveness for you until I am forbidden to do so." Then the following verse was revealed:

﴿ مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَن يَسۡتَغۡفِرُواْ لِلۡمُشۡرِكِينَ وَلَوۡ كَانُوٓاْ أُوْلِي قُرۡبَىٰ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمۡ أَنَّهُمۡ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ١١٣ ﴾

It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allah's forgiveness for the Mushrikûn (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers In the Oneness of Allah) even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are the dwellers of the Fire (because they died in a state of disbelief). (2) (9:13)

And another Prophetic tradition narrated by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him):

A young Jewish boy used to serve the Prophet (peace be upon him) and he became sick so the Prophet (peace be upon him) went to visit him. He sat near his head and asked him to embrace Islam. The boy looked at his father, who was sitting there; the latter told him to obey Abul-Qasim (the Prophet) and the boy embraced Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) came out saying: "Praise be to Allah who saved the boy from Hell-fire."(3)

(1)Transmitted by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and an-Nasa'ī.
(2)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(3)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) permitted -as mentioned above- Asma bint Abu Bakr (Allah may be pleased with him) to host her polytheist mother as well as Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) giving his polytheist brother a shirt which was given to him by the Prophet (peace be upon him).

It is also permitted for a Muslim to accept presents from non-Muslims as long as the presents do not include a violation of the laws of Islam. Such things would include a cross or an animal slaughtered in the name of something or someone other than Allah and other similar things.

The King of Egypt Muqawqis, a Coptic Christian, gave the Prophet (peace be upon him) a gift and the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted it.

Fifthly: Food and drink

From amongst the things that a Muslim should take into consideration when dealing with non-Muslims, is that they should not take them as friends and share food and drink with them in a way that it becomes a habit as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"**Keep only a believer for a companion and let only a pious eat your food**."

This prevention of dining and drinking with non-Muslims is to protect the religion of the Muslim so as not to be affected by non-Muslims such as being impressed by their habits, morals, attitudes, that are contrary to the teaching of Islam, or be attracted to their religion.

But if a non-Muslim is hosted by a Muslim or vice versa there is nothing wrong in providing them with food and drink or partaking in their food and drink if it is free from things that Islam has prohibited for consumption as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"He, who believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him show hospitality to his guest."[1]

So, showing hospitality to guests is prescribed by Islamic law even if the guests are non-Muslims because such hospitality serves to invite them to Islam and goodness and displays to them the virtues of this religion and its high morals.

A non-Muslim delegation of Thaqif came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) in Medina and the Prophet (peace be upon him) was extremely generous to them all the while calling them to Allah Almighty until they embraced Islam. Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted an invitation to a feast by a Jewish woman and ate from her food as we know from the famous anecdote of the poisoned sheep.

Another example would be if a Muslim is invited to a non-religious feast and meets with non-Muslims, there is no harm in eating with them as long as the

(1)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

intention of the Muslim is not to befriend them, rather the Muslim's presence with them is due to the invitation to eat which would be similar to situations such as when all people gather in a market or other public areas.

To summarise, what is prohibited in regards to dining and drinking with non-Muslims is to that which is done for companionship, friendship, and maintaining regular contact with them. There is nothing wrong with dining with them under precarious situations.

Sixthly: Greeting and Salutation.

It is permitted for Muslims to greet non-Muslims with generic words of greeting such as saying 'hello' or 'welcome' but not with the Islamic salutation as is proved from the following Prophetic narration:

"Do not initiate the greetings of peace with the Jews and the Christians."(1)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would initiate his letters of invitation to kings and princes with the sentence: Peace be to those who follow the guidance.

It is permitted for a Muslim to reply to a greeting if it a non Muslim initiated the greeting as generalized by the saying of Allah the Exalted:

﴿ وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُم بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا۟ بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ أَوْ رُدُّوهَآ ﴾

When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. (4:86)

Abu Uthman an-Nahdi said:

"Abu Musa wrote to a Persian grandee and greeted him in his letter. He was asked, 'Do you greet him when he is an unbeliever?' He replied, 'He wrote to me and greeted me, so I have answered him.'(2)

If a gathering contains a mixture of Muslims and non-Muslims, it is permitted for a Muslim to initiate greetings with the intention of greeting Muslims, as proved by the following narration of Usamah ibn Zayd:

Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) rode a donkey equipped with a thick cloth-covering made in Fadak and was riding behind him. He was going to pay visit to Sa`d ibn Ubada in Banu al-Harith ibn Al-Khazraj; and this incident happened before the battle of Badr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) passed by a gathering in which Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salul was present, and that was before Abdullah ibn Ubai embraced Islam. Behold in that gathering there were people of different religions:

(1)Transmitted by Muslim.
(2)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī in Adab al-Mufrad.

there were Muslims, pagans, idol-worshippers and Jews, and in that gathering Abdullah ibn Rawaha was also present. When a cloud of dust raised by the donkey reached that gathering, Abdullah ibn Ubai covered his nose with his garment then said, "Do not cover us with dust." Then Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) greeted them and stopped and dismounted and invited them to Allah and recited to them the Holy Qur'an.[1]

(1)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Religious Duties and their outcomes

Firstly: New Muslims are absolved of any Islamic responsibilities that they missed before their embracing Islam.

The Muslim nation agrees that if a non-Muslim embraces Islam, they do not have to make up for the compulsory acts of worship they missed before Islam whether it the prayer, fasting, almsgiving, or pilgrimage. Allah the Exalted said:

﴿ قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِن يَنتَهُواْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُم مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ﴾

Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief) their past will be forgiven. [8:38]

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) did not command any of those who become Muslim to make up for the compulsory actions that they missed before becoming Muslim because Islam wipes out those actions that occurred before it as the Prophet (peace be upon him) told Amr ibn al-Aas (may Allah be pleased with him) when he to the Prophet in order to embrace Islam and stipulated that the Prophet forgive him so the Prophet said:

“Do you not know that accepting Islam wipes out all sins which come before it?(1)”

Rather it is from the grace of Allah upon his servants that embrace Islam that he rewards them for their good deeds as narrated by Abu Sa'id al Khudari (may Allah be pleased with him): The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

“If a person embraces Islam sincerely, then Allah shall count in his deeds all the good deeds that he did before Islam and wipe out all the bad deeds he had done.”(2)

And on the authority of Hakeem ibn Hizam (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

“O Allah's Apostle! I used to do good deeds in my Pre-Islamic period such as fiving alms, manumitting slaves and keeping good relations with my kith and kin. Will I receive a reward for these?” Allah's Apostle replied, “You embraced Islam with all the good deeds which you did in the past.(3)

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(1)Transmitted by Muslim.
(2)Transmitted by an-Nasa’ī
(3)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Secondly: Commitment to the rulings of Islam and submission to their teachings.

Those who embrace Islam, man or woman, must commit to the teachings and manners of Islam and perform the duties, which Allah the Exalted has imposed upon them such as daily prayers and fasting Ramadan, if there is no excuse that prevents them from fasting. They must also donate the alms from their wealth if they have the minimum required amount and one lunar year has passed as well as performing the Hajj to the House of Allah if they are able-bodied and can afford to do so; in addition to their commitment to wearing the Hijab and other Islamic obligations.

A new Muslim should also completely refrain from performing any action that is forbidden in Islam or is evil in nature. They must not harass or violate the person of another human or worse kill him or her. They should also not violate the honour of another person by committing adultery or sodomy. They should also not violate the wealth of others by theft, bribery or consuming usury and finally they should not violate themselves by drinking intoxicants or consuming drugs or carrying out any other action that has been forbidden in Islam.

Allah the Exalted said:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتُ يُبَايِعۡنَكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن لَّا يُشۡرِكۡنَ بِٱللَّهِ شَيۡـٔٗا وَلَا يَسۡرِقۡنَ وَلَا يَزۡنِينَ وَلَا
يَقۡتُلۡنَ أَوۡلَٰدَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأۡتِينَ بِبُهۡتَٰنٖ يَفۡتَرِينَهُۥ بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِنَّ وَأَرۡجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعۡصِينَكَ فِي مَعۡرُوفٖ
فَبَايِعۡهُنَّ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرۡ لَهُنَّ ٱللَّهَۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٢﴾

O Prophet! when believing women come to you to give you the Bai'â (pledge), that they will not associate anything In worship with Allâh, that they will not steal, that they will not commit illegal sexual intercourse, that they will not kill their children, that they will not utter slander, intentionally forging falsehood (i.e. by making illegal Children belonging to their husbands), and that they will not disobey You In any Ma'rûf (Islamic Monotheism and All that which Islâm ordains) then accept their Bai'â (pledge), and ask Allâh to forgive them, Verily, Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (60:12)

New Muslims should also take into consideration the following after immediately coming into the fold of Islam:

a) Performing the Islamic bath "Ghusl"

It is prescribed for a person who embraces Islam to take a bath based on the narration of Abu Hurairah on Thumahmah ibn Uthaal's embracing Islam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated

"Take him to the wall of so-and-so tribe and command him to bathe"(1)

It was also narrated by Qais ibn 'Asim in the Prophetic tradition:

That he accepted Islam, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded him to perform Ghusl with water and lotus leaves.(2)

b) Circumcision

Circumcision: is the removal of the foreskin (prepuce) from the male organ.

The new Muslim should have himself circumcised if it has not been done before his embracing Islam because circumcision is from the rites of Islam, the natural disposition of man and the way of Abraham (peace be upon him). The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has stated the following about him:

"(The Prophet) Abraham circumcised himself after he had passed the age of eighty years"(3)

If the new Muslim is unable to have himself circumcised fearing some harm to his health due to his old age or illness or a trustworthy doctor has told him that he may bleed which could cost him his life, then there is no harm in not doing the circumcision.

c) Learning the Opening Chapter (Surah al-Fatiha)

Reciting the Opening Chapter of the Quran is a fundamental pillar of the prayer without which the prayer is not correct, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"There is no prayer for the one has performed the prayer without reciting the opening chapter of the Book."(4)

Consequently, a new Muslim must be active in learning the chapter through Arabic pronunciation.

If a new Muslim is unable to learn the Opening Chapter immediately then they should praise, thank, testify and glorify the name of Allah until they are able to learn it by heart as stated in the narration of Rifa'ah ibn Rafi (may Allah be pleased with him)

The Apostle of Allah told him in the following Prophetic tradition:

"Then perform ablution in the way Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, has commanded you, then say the testimony of faith and stand erect and say the

(1)Transmitted by Ahmad.
(2)Transmitted by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhī, and an-Nasa'ī.
(3)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.
(4)Transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

takbir then if you know any of the Qur'an, recite it otherwise say: Praise be to Allah; Allah is most great and; There is no god but Allah"(1)

d) Learning Wudhu "ablution"

Ablution is a condition for the performance of the five daily prayers as Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغْسِلُواْ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْمَرَافِقِ وَٱمْسَحُواْ بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْكَعْبَيْنِ﴾

O you who believe! When you intend to offer As-Salât (the prayer), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles. (5:6)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained that the prayer is not accepted without ablution and he (peace be upon him) said:

"The prayer of anyone is not complete unless he performs the ablution completely"(2)

e) The obligation of fasting during Ramadan

If a person embraces Islam during the month of Ramadan and their conversion to Islam was after dawn then they must refrain from food or the rest of the day and intend to fast the next day and the remaining days of the month. If their conversion to Islam was before dawn then they must intend to fast the next day and the remaining days of the month. In both situations, the new Muslim does not have to make up for the days they missed before becoming a Muslim.

f) The obligation of paying the al-Fitr alms

If a person embraces Islam before sunset on the last day of Ramadan then they must give the alms of al-Fitr to the needy if they have enough provisions for their personal and family needs. However, if a person embraces Islam after sunset on the last day of Ramadan they are not required to give alms.

(1)Transmitted by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhī.
(2)Transmitted by Abu Dawud.

Pictures and supplements



Picture No. (1)



Picture No. (2)



Picture No. (3)



Picture No. (4)



Picture No. (5)



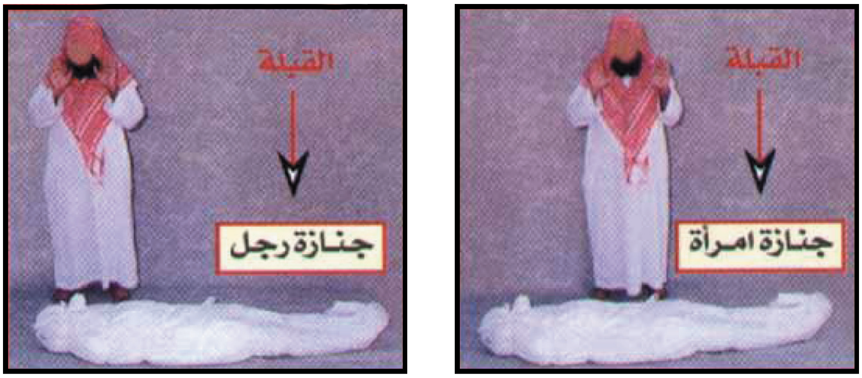
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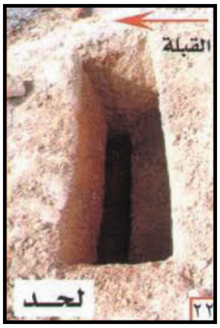
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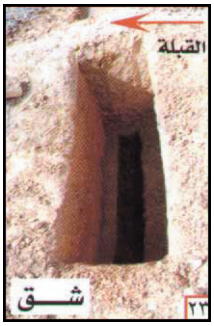
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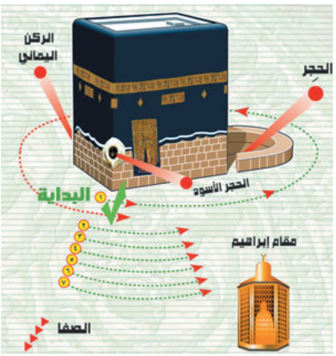
Picture No. (9)-(10)



Picture No. (11)



Picture No. (12)





Picture No. (13)-(14)

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